



TRAVELS OF

GURU NANAK

SURINDER SINGH KOHLI

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PREFATORY NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

This work about the journeys of Guru Nanak, throughout the length and breadth of India and also in distant foreign lands, had an encouraging reception, not only during the quincentenary birthday celebrations of Guru Nanak, but also in later years. Therefore this second edition of the book has been published. The great Guru travelled thousands of miles, mainly on foot for about two decades, in all the four directions, enlightening humanity with his spiritual discourses and divine songs. Though more than five centuries have passed the founder of Sikhism is remembered with great reverence, even in the areas inhabited by non-Sikhs.

There are memorials of the Guru in all the States in Indian Union. There are still several traces of his visit in the Middle-East countries, namely Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Afghanistan. The account of his visit to Ceylon, inscribed on a slab, is preserved in Archaeological Museum at Anuradhapura. His footprints in various countries could not be preserved long because of either turmoil or neglect. Further researches about the

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travels of the Guru may bring forth new revelations. The research and study presented by Professor S. S. Kohli is both inspiring and revealing.

**Panjab University
Chandigarh**

**Ram Chand Paul
Vice-Chancellor**

March 16, 1978,

PREFATORY NOTE TO FIRST EDITION

Guru Nanak has a unique place amongst the spiritual leaders, preceptors, reformers and saints of India. His teachings have a universal appeal and they hold good for all ages.

The impact of this great Teacher on Indian Society during the last 500 years cannot be easily estimated. In the fields of spirituality and ethics, he has deeply influenced the lives, thinking and conduct of millions of people.

India—and more so the Punjab—can legitimately feel proud that this man of God was born in this land. But the great Master did not confine his mission to this country; he travelled far and wide, to far-off lands and countries, in order to enlighten humanity as a whole and deliver to them his message of love, hope, peace, devotion to God, social justice, religious tolerance and universal brotherhood of man. For Guru Nanak no country was foreign and no people were alien.

We are fortunate that the 500th Birth Anniversary of the Great Guru has fallen during our life. It is an opportunity for mankind to acknowledge its debt of gratitude to its great benefactor and teacher. It should be a matter of gratification for all concerned that the auspicious occasion is being celebrated, in a befitting manner, throughout India, as well as at numerous places abroad.

The Panjab University, Chandigarh also decided to pay its respectful homage to Guru Nanak not only by holding the celebrations on a level which the occasion demanded, but also by publishing nine standard and scholarly books on the life, teachings, philosophy, poetry and other aspects of the great Teacher.

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The authors of all these books have attempted to deal with the subject-matter of their respective books in an objective, dispassionate, authentic and scholarly manner. There can be difference of opinion amongst scholars but honest differences should not be unwelcome in the world of scholarship.

The present book is one of the set which is being published by the Panjab University on the auspicious occasion.

Guru Nanak covered thousands of miles on foot during his lifetime for spreading his mission. His travels, known as 'Udasis', not only included various parts of India, but also a large number of foreign countries, such as Ceylon, Tibet, China, Arabia, Turkestan, Iraq, Persia, Afghanistan etc. The book gives a vivid account of these travels.

I should also like to take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation for Shri Bal Krishna, Secretary, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, who has produced this book, as well as all the other books of the set, in a very short time and in a very efficient manner.

Panjab University
Chandigarh
November 23, 1969

Suraj Bhan
Vice-Chancellor

INTRODUCTION

In every age, there have been travellers and explorers, who left their native places for distant countries either as pilgrims or as missionaries. We know of Fa-Hien and Hieun Tsang, the celebrated Chinese pilgrims and explorers, who came to India; of Alberuni, Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta and others who travelled in several countries in the east; of Columbus, Vasco-da-Gama, Albuquerque etc., the noted seafarers and explorers; of David Livingstone, the famous Christian missionary, who penetrated into the interior of Africa. There are many others who have left the account of their travels. But very little is known of Guru Nanak as one of the great travellers of the world. This work is an attempt to describe the travels of the Guru Nanak in India and various countries and continents, so that the world may know of him as a great traveller, a great missionary and a great teacher.

I do not claim any special research on the subject, but I have tried to bring together all the facts mentioned in various Sikh chronicles. Though only five hundred years have passed since the birth of Guru Nanak, many legends have cropped up around his remarkable personality. It has been my endeavour in this work to separate the *historical* Guru Nanak from the *legendary* Guru Nanak.

Wherever Guru Nanak went, his followers erected a memorial in that place, but, during the past five centuries, there have been several currents and cross-currents which effaced some of the footprints of the great Guru; therefore a good deal of research is required to bring the forgotten memorials to light. Some Sikhs tried to travel along the routes followed by Guru Nanak and were successful in discovering

some places connected with the Guru, but since the travels of the Guru were spread to distant lands and hazardous regions, the same person could not cover all the routes or places.

In *Janamsakhis* (the biographies of Guru Nanak) several old names of places and regions have been mentioned, which cannot be located. Similarly, the names of the kings of some regions are not found in history. This is, in fact, puzzling. We are faced with several accounts imbued with supernaturalism and full of miracles, but we have accepted only the scientific interpretation. Our task would have been much easier if some firsthand information had been available. The Guru himself did not write an account of his travels. We have to depend for source-material on *Janamsakhis* viz. *Puratan Janamsakhi*, *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala*, *Sachkhand Pothi of Sodhi Meharban*, *Gyan Retnavali* of Bhai Mani Singh based on the first Var of Bhai Gurdas, *Mahima Prakash* of Sarup Das Bhalla, *Nanak Prakash* of Bhai Santokh Singh, *Nanak Suryoday* of Mahant Ganesha Singh, *Prachin Panth Prakash* and *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* of Gyani Gyan Singh etc. Some other works like *Pran Sangal* and *Makka Madina di Goshta* have also to be studied in connection with the visit of Guru Nanak to several places.

After studying the routes that Guru Nanak followed we are convinced that the Guru travelled along the ancient land-routes. These were highways of traffic and pilgrim-travel as well as of migration and invasion.¹ In *Janamsakhis* we find an irregular and mixed-up description of the four journeys of Guru Nanak. His journeys begin from the Punjab and progress towards the east, south, north and west. While journeying towards the east, he passed through Delhi, U.P., Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Manipur, Tripura, etc. and on his return through Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. During his second

1. *A History of Indian Civilization* by Radha Kamal Mukerjee, Ed. Oct. 1956, pp. 104-109.

journey towards the south, he covered the areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnatak, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Ceylon. His northern journey was through the mountainous region of Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan and thence to China. When he proceeded towards the west, he travelled through the Middle-Eastern states and countries viz. Aden, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Persia, Russo-Turkestan and Afghanistan.

The ancient land-routes that were, more or less, followed by Guru Nanak in his outward or return journeys are as follows :

- (a) The land-route passing through north-west connecting Afghanistan, Balkh and Middle East. This route also connected India with China and Central Asia.
- (b) The Indo-Egyptian route running along Makran and Baluchistan. The entrance to Arabia and Egypt was through the valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris. In the middle ages the Arab merchants used this route frequently.
- (c) The route connecting India with Tibet and China through the Zojila pass in Ladakh and the Karakoram pass. Through this highway the Tibetan pilgrims have been and are visiting Kashmir and the Punjab.
- (d) The land-route connecting Bengal, Assam, Manipur with Burma, Thailand and Indo-China.
- (e) The land-route through the passes of the Himalayas connecting Sikkim and Chumbi Valley with Tibet and China.

Bharat-Varsha (India) is a sacred land having sacred mountains, sacred rivers and holy temples throughout the length and breadth of the country. Before the advent of Guru Nanak on the Indian scene, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Nathism, Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Shaktism had held their sway over the vast areas of this sub-continent. Guru Nanak wanted to visit all the important centres of these religions and meet the religious leaders of his time for a re-orientation in the religious outlook. He had an extraordinary religious zeal which made him even cross the Indian borders for distant lands in order to establish his remarkable missions in other religious centres.

The Muslims were the rulers of India at that time. Guru Nanak had the courage to meet the king and the high dignitaries of the state and speak of their atrocities openly, frankly and fearlessly. He was not satisfied with his contacts with the Muslims in India ; therefore he visited Mecca, Medina and Baghdad in the Middle East and held religious discussions with the Muslim religious leaders there. Similarly, he met the followers of other world-religions at their premier places of worship and talked about his concept of True Religion. There is sufficient historical evidence which shows that many people became his followers in his lifetime in the various parts of the world.

The sacred temples of various gods and goddesses in India are situated on the mountains, lakes, river-banks and seashores. In the Himalayas, there are temples of Amarnath, Kedarnath and Badri Narayana. In Gauhati, on the bank of the Brahmaputra, there is the temple of mother goddess Kamakhya, at Somnath, there is the temple of Shiva and at Dwarka of Vishnu, at Ajmer of Savitri near the Pushkar lake. There are many sacred rivers : Ganga, Jamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri. All these temples were visited by Guru

Nanak in those days when there were no pacca roads and no fast-moving conveyance was available.

Guru Nanak travelled mostly on foot. He had to pass through deserts, climb the steep mountains, cross rivers and streams and walk through the fertile plains. He had to cross oceans when he visited the islands or other far-off places approachable by sea. For several years of his life he travelled continually with one or two companions by his side. He had a holy mission to perform and his performance was no less than a miracle.

The successors of Guru Nanak confined their activities within India, and mostly in Punjab and Delhi; therefore the traces of the visit of Guru Nanak abroad are passing into oblivion, if not already effaced. Wherever there are temples or mosques in the name of Guru Nanak or Bhadra Guru or Nanak Pir or Wali Hind, they have to be re-built. The memorial of the Guru in Baghdad needs special attention. Old historical records of all those countries, where there is a memorial in the name of the Guru, must be checked up and all the facts about his visit collected, so that a complete biography of the Great Guru be compiled. I shall feel amply rewarded if this book raises the interest of the world in the remarkable personality of Guru Nanak.

In his book recently published 'Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion', Dr. W. H. McLeod has cast doubts on the travels of Guru Nanak, not only in the Middle East, but also to some places in India and the Himalayas. However, he has discussed only the *Janamsakhis* and has not considered the available external evidence. There are still memorials of the Guru at many places and thousands and lakhs of people other than Sikhs remember him with profound veneration in different areas. The Panjab University provided me with facilities to visit the different places in India which were visited by Guru Nanak. During my

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study tour I covered about seven to eight thousand Kilometres. However, my tour only covers two-fifth of the book. The far-off places could not be visited due to lack of time and funds; therefore I have mostly depended on the details of the journey of the great Guru on Sikh chronicles. Several mistakes, however, may have crept in. But the reader, I hope, will think of the greatness of the traveller and his mission, and will not mind my failings.

I thank heartily my worthy Vice-Chancellor, Shri Suraj Bhan, for his encouragement in this venture, and Shri Bal Krishna, Secretary, Publication Bureau, Panjab University, for his great labour in the printing and publication of the work.

Panjab University
Chandigarh

SURINDER SINGH KOHLI

MY QUINCENTENARY ITINERARY

In this short article I want to give some observations regarding my itinerary in respect of my research in connection with the Travels of Guru Nanak. It was in early 1969 that I tried to get help from various sources including Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, for the expenses of my journey but I was not successful in getting any thing from various quarters. I had depended mostly upon Sikh Institutions for this purpose but none of them came forward to assist in my venture. Ultimately I requested my own University and it goes to the credit of my Vice-Chancellor and the Quincentenary Committee of the Panjab University that I was granted expenses for my journey.

Originally I had thought of travelling in different directions throughout India, but because of the fast approaching Birthday of the Great Guru I could not but curtail my journey to various important places within a short span of three weeks.

It will be of interest to the readers that I travelled through Delhi, U. P., Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnatak, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan. The idea of writing a book on the Travels of Guru Nanak had been in my mind for several years but without time, resources and other facilities it was not possible for me to do so. I cannot believe myself how I could tour through such a large area within such a short time but as a devout Sikh I believe that it was only the Grace of Sat-Guru. It is not possible to give all the details of my journey in this short article. However, I shall make some observations which will be very useful for further investigations and research.

We have very often read about the travels of various explorers and missionaries in various parts of the world but one thing that will be of great interest to the readers is that in those days of turmoil and chaos when there were no means of communication as we have today. Guru Nanak set his foot on all the states of India. I am not concerned here with the travels of Guru Nanak abroad because in this article I have to keep in view only my itinerary.

The first observation that I have to make is that the Guru visited all the major centres of worship and devotion of various religious systems and cults in India. The main religious centres of Hindus at that time were Benaras and Prayag (Allahabad). At these places the Guru met the leaders of both types i.e. the reactionaries and the reformists. He came into contact with the vedantists of various orders. Jagannath Puri in Orissa was the third important Hindu centre of worship and it was here that Guru Nanak is said to have met Lord Gauranga or Chaitanya Maha Prabhu and joined the congregation in devotional singing. I have a feeling that it was at this place that Guru Nanak also met Vallabhacharya, the exponent of *Shudhadvaita*. As is apparent from the verses of the Great Guru, he rejected the formalism, symbolism and all types of rituals of the Hindus. He was out and out for *Brahmvidya* or *Para-Vidya* i.e. the education that leads us to spiritual bliss. In this respect we find some similarity in his teachings with the thought contained in the Upanishads.

The major cults of Hinduism at that time were Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Shaktism. The Guru visited all the major shrines connected with these cults, whether in Northern India or the Southern India. The Guru visited all the maths of Shankracharya and also the centres of propagation connected with his predecessors and contemporaries of Bhakti Movement. It will be of great interest to the readers to note

that Kabir, whom the historians call the predecessor of Guru Nanak, was alive at the time of the journeys of Guru Nanak within India. When I crossed Narbada river in Gujarat, I halted at Broach where I came to know that Kabir and Guru Nanak met each other and stayed together there for some time. The renowned saint had come to meet Guru Nanak from Kabir Bara about 10 miles away from Broach.

Although Buddhism was not a living force in the time of Guru Nanak, he visited their major centre Bodh Gaya in Bihar and held discussions with their religious Head. Jainism had remained a great force in the centuries preceding Guru Nanak. Therefore the Guru made it a point to visit their major centres in Rajasthan and Gujarat. He met Jainas in Bikaner and Mount Abu in Rajasthan and visited their most famous centre at Palitana in Gujarat.

Because of the shortage of time at my disposal I could not visit the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. I very much wished to go upto Rameshvaram in Tamil Nadu and then cross to Ceylon where the Guru is said to have stayed for a couple of years. In Southern India the Guru is said to have visited the abode of Maharashtrian saint Namdev besides his visits to the various Hindu shrines. It is probable that he met the leaders of the Christian community living at that time in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

I fear that most of the places visited by Guru will find no place in the pages of Sikh history in the coming years because the memorials, if any, are passing into oblivion because of the sense of possession on the part of the local priests. Much of the work that has been done in raising the memorials by the Udasi saints is being now undone by those who are in their possession. The Udasis who are in charge of the two shrines in the name of

Guru Nanak at Jagannath Puri do not know anything about Sikhism nor have they any faith in the doctrines of Guru Nanak but they continue to be the keepers of those places because the Sikhs visit them and out of their devotion they pay some amount to the priests. I also came to know that at some places, the priests fearing the possession by the Sikhs do not keep the holy Guru Granth Sahib in the precincts of the places concerned. It is high time that the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the other Sikh Institutions should take necessary steps in this direction.

Throughout the length and breadth of the country I have come across persons, who have faith in the religion of Guru Nanak. There are still Nanak Shahi Sangats in Bihar, Bengal and Assam. About two lakh *Tharus* who live around Pilibhit in U. P. have full faith in the doctrines of the Great Guru. There are hundreds of thousands of *Wanjaras* inhabiting the Central and Southern India, who are the Sikhs of Guru Nanak. There are Labanas and others in Gujarat and elsewhere having full faith in the teachings of the Great Guru. They can all be called the Nanak Panthis.

In the end, I want to make one suggestion that full equipped teams of Scholars be sent to all the States of India and gather further information regarding the Travels of Guru Nanak. My short treatise entitled "Travels of Guru Nanak" can only serve as a basis for further investigation and research.

Author

THE FIRST JOURNEY

GURU NANAK IN THE PUNJAB

By the word 'Punjab' is meant the land of the five rivers Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum. From time to time the boundaries of the Punjab have been changing. But in this chapter I refer to the pre-partition Punjab, which included West Punjab (now in West Pakistan) and East Punjab (now split up into the New Punjab, Haryana and some hilly tracts which have been included in Himachal Pradesh). Guru Nanak was born in 1469 at Rae Bho di Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib) situated in Sheikhpura district of West Pakistan. Mehta Kalyan Rai, the father of Guru Nanak was a petty revenue official stationed at Talwandi. Rae Bular was the landlord of the place. The ruler of Delhi at that time was Behlol Lodhi.

At Talwandi

In his childhood the Guru showed signs of his future greatness. At the age of six, he was sent to the village Pandit Gopal for primary education. The young student asked the Pandit to explain the spiritual and hidden side of the things. But the Pandit could not answer. He was perplexed at the deep erudition of the young student. Guru Nanak's thoughts which he exchanged with his teacher, are contained in his poem entitled *Patti*. For the next three years there was no schooling for the child Nanak. Then the father made up his mind to send his son to Pandit Brij Nath Sharma for the study of Sanskrit. The old incident was repeated. Now it was generally thought that the child would not get any education. After some time Mehta Kalyan Rai sent him to the nearby pasture

with the cattle. On one day, the cattle laid waste a field of a peasant. A complaint was lodged with the landlord Rae Bular, who was also the officer of the village. The Guru said that there was no wastage and the field might be examined again. On a re-examination the crop in the field was found intact. Nowadays in this field there is a gurdwara named "Kiara Sahib" commemorating this incident.

At the age of eleven the Guru was sent to the village Maulvi to study Persian, the court language, but the same thing happened as had already happened in the case of the previous two teachers. It is said that thoughts of the Guru, expressed at this juncture, are contained in a *Siharfi* not included in the *Adi Granth*. A Gurdwara named Maulvi Patti is an evidence of this incident.

Mehta Kalyan Rai thought that it was now time to perform the *upanayana Samskara* of his son. He wanted him to wear the sacred thread (*yagyopavita*, *Janeyoo* or *Janjhu*). But the Guru opposed this ceremony. In fact, he was against all kinds of formalism and symbolism. According to him, there is no use of wearing such a thread which breaks away or can be destroyed in any way. He said that the cotton should be of mercy, the thread of contentment, the knot of self-control and the twist of truth. Such a thread can never be destroyed. The Guru's verses conveying these thoughts are included in *Āsa kī Vār*.

During the same year two incidents occurred which filled the mind of Rae Bular with great reverence for the young Guru. The Guru used to go out in the solitude for meditation and the landlord used to go for hunting. On one occasion at noon he saw a cobra putting a shade on the face of the young Guru with his hood while the Guru was taking rest. On another occasion, in the afternoon, he saw the shadow of the tree still on the face of the reclining Guru against the heat of the sun, although the

shadows of other trees had moved away with the movement of the sun. Such incidents filled the mind of Rae Bular with intense faith in the person of the Guru whom he considered a *Wali*. A Gurdwara named Mal Sahib has preserved the memory of the latter incident.

For most of the time the Guru remained in meditation. The parents and other people thought that there was something wrong with the health of the boy, therefore, they called in the doctor (*Vaid*), when he began to feel the pulse, the Guru addressed him thus : "The doctor has been called to diagnose, he catches the arm and feels the pulse. The simple *Vaid* does not know that the pain is in the heart. Go home, doctor, do not investigate my ailment. I die for my Lord and whom do you give the medicine ?"

When the Guru was about fifteen, he is said to have visited Pakpattan with Mardana and met Sheikh Ibrahim the descendant of Farid Shakarganj. When he returned home, his father fearing lest his son might not become a recluse, asked him to adopt the profession of a trader. He gave him twenty rupees and sent him away with Bhai Bala to transact a true bargain. When he reached the outskirts of Chuharkana, he came across an assembly of hungry Sadhus. The Guru thought that there could not be a better bargain than to feed the famished people. Therefore he asked Bhai Bala to bring victuals for the Sadhus. The whole money was spent there. There is a Gurdwara named "Sachcha Sauda" at the place of this incident. When the Guru returned to Talwandi, he is said to have hid himself among a cluster of trees, fearing the wrath of his father. The father slighted him and is said to have slapped him but his sister Nanaki intervened. A Gurdwara named "Tambu Sahib" stands at the site.

At Nankana Sahib, the birthday of the Guru is celebrated every year, on Kartik Purnima. The chief memorial of the Guru at Nankana is Gurdwara Janam Asthan, where the Guru was born. Before the partition, lakhs of Sikhs used to gather here on the birthday of the Guru but during the holocaust of 1947, the Sikhs migrated to Indian Punjab. Nowadays hundreds of Sikhs from India and other countries visit the place. Having been separated from the birthplace of the founder of their religion, the movement of the Sikhs to get the Vatican status for Nankana Sahib is gaining momentum. There is a tank named "Nanak Sar" near the Gurdwara Janam Asthan. In the earlier years of the life of the Guru there was a pond at this place where the Guru used to take his bath with his friends. Gurdwara Manji Sahib or Bal Leela Sahib stands on its bank. It is said that Rao Bular built a small-sized tank on this village pond, which was later on enlarged by Dewan Kaura Mal in the 18th century.

At Sultanpur

When Mehta Kalyan Rai was convinced that it was futile to think of reforming his son, he sent him to his daughter Nanaki at Sultanpur in 1484 where his son-in-law Jai Ram was the Dewan (Minister) of the Pathan Governor Daulat Khan Lodhi. The young Guru was received with great reverence in the house of his sister. Here also his time was spent mostly in the company of the saints or in meditation. For several months his brother-in-law was thoughtful about his future career. A fear lurked in his mind that if the young Nanak was not given some job to do, he might roam away in the company of the Sadhus. Keeping this in view he approached the Nawab for a job for the young brother-in-law. The Nawab readily appointed the youngman as his store-cum-shop-keeper. Although such a job did not suit the temperament of the

young Guru, he yielded to the wishes of his sister and the Dewan.

It was 1485 when the young Guru joined the service of Nawab Daulat Khan. From the sales depot, the Guru would give rations to the poor free of charge and sometimes while weighing he would stop counting beyond Tera (thirteen) and would repeat this digit which also means 'I am Thine'. This showed the intensity of divine love in him. The customers would be surprised. Several times the complaints were made to the Nawab against the young store-keeper alleging that he was squandering away the stores of the Nawab. The Nawab would order a thorough checking of the accounts, but all the times there was no loss to the treasury.

Mehta Kalyan Rai had a great satisfaction now regarding his son who had joined the government service. Therefore with the help of his son-in-law Dewan Jai Ram, he married him with Sulakhani, daughter of Shri Mool Chand of village Pakkhoke in Gurdaspur district. The marriage took place in 1487. In 1493, his first son Baba Sri Chand—the founder of Udasi Sect—was born. The second son Baba Lakshmi Chand was born in 1496. At Batala, where the Guru was married, a Gurdwara stands in his memory. About five Kos south of Batala, there is village Udoke, where on the occasion of his marriage, the Guru cut the branch of a Jand tree.

One day in 1497, when in the early hours of the morning, the Guru went to take a bath in the nearby stream *wayeen*, he disappeared mysteriously. It is recorded in the Sikh chronicles that he went into the presence of God and received the *Divine Name* from the Lord for the deliverance of humanity. When he reappeared on the bank of the stream after three days, he was a changed man. The Lord had given him a job, therefore, he relinquished the service of the Nawab. Some people complained

to the Nawab that the mysterious disappearance of the Guru and then his resignation from the job was a sure indication that he had squandered away the stores. But after a thorough investigation it was found that a sum of Re. 404 was due to the Guru.

The Guru at this time repeatedly announced, "Na ko Hindu Na Mussalman"—There is no Hindu and no Mohammedan. This slogan was not relished by the Muslims, who were the rulers. Guru Nanak emphasised the equality of all human beings, but the rulers thought that they were superior to their subjects. Guru Nanak laid stress on the fact that both the Hindus and Muslims were far away from reality, but the Muslims resented this statement. If all were equal in the eyes of God, then the Guru could pray to the *Allah* (the Lord) in a Mosque with the Muslims. The Guru had no objection to offering prayers in a mosque. The Nawab, the priest, the Guru and others stood for the prayer. While the others were busy praying, the Guru was smiling. The Guru was questioned about this action. He told the Nawab that he (Nawab) was not praying but instead buying horses in Kabul. He told the priest that instead of praying, he (the priest) was all the time thinking of the newly born foal fearing lest it may not fall in the ditch close by. Both the Nawab and the priest felt ashamed.

At Sultanpur a memorial named "Hatti Sahib" is still preserved at the place of the shop-cum-store where the Guru served for about twelve years as a *Modi* (store-keeper). The small room in which the Guru settled the accounts with the Nawab is known as Gurdwara Kothri Sahib. The residence of Jai Ram and the family of the Guru is called Guru ka Bagh and the memorial at the place where the Guru disappeared on the bank of Wayeen has been named Gurdwara "Sant Ghat".

The "Ber Tree" under which the Guru used to sit after taking bath in the stream is known as "Ber Sahib". During his stay at Sultanpur the Gvuru isited the surrounding villages and several persons accepted him as a spiritual guide including Bhai Bhagirath of the neighbouring village Malsihan. The Guru used to sing the praises of the Lord; therefore he decided to have a musician with him. Bhai Mardana, his village bard (*Mirāsi*) was selected for this purpose and a rebec (*rabab*) was procured for him from Bhai Phiranda of village Bhairoana. This village is situated at a distance of two miles from Giddar Pindi Railway station.

Journeys in various parts of the Punjab

The fame of the Guru began to spread far and wide and the people began to gather around him. In 1499 the Guru left Sultanpur. His first stay was at Hakimpura in Jullundur district where there is a tank named Nanaksar. Thereafter he visited Lahore, where he stayed in the house of his disciple Jawahar Mal for a week. All the prominent Hindu and Muslim divines of the city came to meet him including Wali Sayyed Ahmed, the religious preceptor of Sikander Lodhi. Many people were benefitted by the religious discourses of the Guru, Bhai Mansukh, a prominent disciple of the Guru also belonged to Lahore. The house (Chuhatta) of Jawahar Mal is still preserved as a memorial to the Guru in Mohalla Sirian Wala. At the time of Guru Nanak's visit, Lahore was ruled by a very cruel Subedar. The people were corrupt and unjust. The Guru said "Lahore Sahr Zahr Kahr Sava Pehr". This prediction about the destruction of Lahore was fulfilled with the advent of Babar in 1524.

While at Lahore, the Guru made short trips to the surrounding areas. He visited Goindwal, Fatehabad, Ram Tirath (now a

part of Amritsar), Jahman, Chahal. Ghavindi, Khalra, Kanganwal and Manak Deke.

There is a Gurdwara and a tank at village Jahman (Police station Barki) and a Dera at Chahal. The parents of Guru's mother lived at Chahal, therefore, it was visited by him several times even as a child. While going to Jahman, the village Chahal falls in the way. The pond where the Guru used to halt has been converted into a tank. The place where the Guru used to take rest is known as Rori Sahib. Bhai Naria of Jahman had been a famous devotee of the Guru. From Jahman the Guru came to Ghavindi (Police station Barki) where the Guru rested under a Lūhrā tree where a Gurdwara has been built which is known as Gurdwara Lūhrā Sahib. The Guru is said to have composed a hymn here on noticing the rejoicings on the birth and the lamentations on the death of the son of a *wanjara*. From Ghavindi the Guru came to Khalra, where the people are said to have cut jokes with the Guru who said, "Waso Raso Khalra, Maro Mahajan Nang". The Guru left Khalra and passed by site of Amritsar and rested at the site of Manji Sahib on the site of Guruana. Then he proceeded to Kanganwal, where the people treated him with disrespect but the Guru said 'wasde raho' (may you live here). The Guru rested under a tree where now stands Gurdwara Mal Sahib. From Kanganwal the Guru came to Manak Deke or Bhil where he was received with great reverence, but the Guru said, "Ujar Jao" (may you leave this place). There is a Gurdwara Manji Sahib here in the memory of the Guru. When the Guru was asked why he said 'wasde raho' for those who ill-treated him and 'Ujar Jao' for those who received him warmly, he replied that wherever the good would go, they would spread virtue, but the ill-mannered should live at one place and not spoil the world with their vices.

The Guru also visited Alpa and Manga in Lahore District, where there are Dharamsalas known as Chhota Nankana

After Lahore, the Guru visited Eminabad, passing through several places. The people of this place were not happy with the corrupt administration of Nawab Sehn Khan and his Dewan (Minister) Malik Bhago. The Guru stayed with a carpenter named Lalo. He was a Kshatriya and Lalo was a Shudra and the stay of the Guru with a Shudra was not liked by high-caste Hindus. Moreover, the Guru refused to attend a feast arranged by the Dewan in which the Brahmins and other divines were invited. This infuriated Malik Bhago. He compelled the Guru to reach the place and explain his conduct. The Guru plainly told the Dewan that he did not like to eat such bread as contained the blood of the poor people. The Dewan demanded the proof and Guru pressed the food from the kitchen of Malik Bhago in one hand and that of Bhai Lalo in the other. The blood oozed out from the bread of Malik Bhago and milk came out from the bread of Bhai Lalo. By this the Guru emphasised the necessity of earning through honest means and condemned the suppression of the poor.

The place where the Guru stayed on reaching the town is called 'Rori Sahib'. Here the Guru sat and lay on a bed of stonepebbles. The well of Bhai Lalo from which the Guru used to take bath and drink water is now preserved in the precincts of "Gurdwara Khui Sahib".

From Eminabad, the Guru came to Sialkot, the city of king Salbahan and his son Puran Bhagat after passing through Vairoval and Sioke. The place where the Guru rested is known as Chhota Nankana. It was the residence of one of the Guru's disciples, Bhai Rupa. At Sialkot, the Guru came to know that a Muslim divine Hamza Ghaus was bent upon destroying the city because one of the inhabitants had not kept up his word of

offering one of the children, though with the blessings of the Pir he was father of several children. The Guru told the people that the anger of the Pir was not proper. How could the whole city be destroyed because of the wrong behaviour of one person? The Guru sent Bhai Mardana to buy falsehood and truth with two pice. One shopkeeper named Mula wrote on a piece of paper "The death is true and the life is false". The Guru showed this paper to the Pir and argued with him about the impropriety of his proposed action for the fault of one man when persons like Bhai Mula were there in the city. The Pir was very much impressed by the counsel and argument of the Guru and surrendered to his wishes. Thus the city of Sialkot was saved from destruction.

The Ber tree under which the Guru sat is still preserved in Gurdwara Ber Sahib. Gurdwara Baoli Sahib stands on the site of the residence of Bhai Mula who remained in the company of the Guru for some time. There is another Gurdwara Ber Sahib at Sahawal at a distance of five kos from Sialkot; which the Guru visited after Sialkot. From Sahawal and Ugoke the Guru proceeded to the site of a big Pond where there is now a tank known as 'Nanak Sar'. Then the Guru visited Pasrur and the surrounding area. He went to Deoka and Mitha Kotla; the Muslim divine Mithan Shah and his preceptor Abdul Rehman became his disciples after a good deal of religious discussion. The Guru convinced them that the religion is not considered in the court of the Lord. Only the actions of a person will bring him release.

The Guru now returned to Talwandi in order to meet his parents and Rae Bular before proceeding on a longer journey. The people at home advised the Guru to lead a comfortable life at home and avoid long journeys. But the Guru said, "The call has come and I must go". Thereafter he left on his journey towards the east.

Besides Mardana, Bhai Bala also accompanied the Guru. At first they came to Chhanga Manga (in Lahore Distt.), where there is nowadays a Sikh temple called Chhota Nankana Sahib. From Chhanga Manga they proceeded to Chuhnian where the Guru is said to have met Shaikh Dāūd and Sayyad Hamad Ganj Bakhsh, the Muslim divines. Then he passed through Haryana area (*Bangroo Desha*) which was touched both ways—while going on the first journey and while coming back to Sultanpur and Talwandi.

In Haryana, the Guru visited various important centres while going out on the first journey and while coming back after the completion of the journey. Passing through Malwa region of the Punjab, the Guru reached Sirsa (in Hissar district). He is said to have stayed here for four months and eleven days and held religious discussions with Khwaja Abdul Shakar, Bahawal Haq, Jalal-ud-Din and other noted divines. There is a Gurdwara in the memory of Guru's visit near the Panj Pir mosque. It is said that the Guru visited Hissar and Rohtak also while touring Haryana.

From Sirsa, the Guru proceeded towards Kurukshetra and Thanesar where the great decisive battle of Kaurvas and Pandavas was fought and where the celestial song 'Gita' took its birth. Pehowa fell in the way on the bank of Sarasvati. It is a holy place of pilgrimage. The Guru saw people offering victuals (balls of barley flour) to their *Pitris* (fore-fathers) and were being exploited by the priests. The Guru told the people that nothing reaches *Pitris*. In the next world each individual gets whatever he had earned through his actions in this world. One should do such actions as earn for him the grace of the Guru and the Lord.

From Pehowa the Guru went to Thanesar. It is an old city and had remained capital of an old kingdom comprising parts of

southern Punjab and Rajasthan. This place has been considered holy since a very long time, especially because of its association with Lord Krishna and *Mahabharata*. It formed part of the Kuru country including Sonapat, Karnal, Panipat etc., and has also been prominently known as Kurukshetra. The word "Kurukshetra" means the cultivated land of the Kurus and included the sacred region between the Sarasvati and the Drsadvati.

At Kurukshetra a great fair was being held due to sun-eclipse when the Guru reached there. A neighbouring exiled prince came to the Guru with the corpse of a hunted deer and narrated his woeful story. The Guru blessed him regarding the return of his lost territory, but asked him to cut down and put the meat of the deer in a vessel for boiling. Seeing the fire and smelling the odours of the boiling meat, the priests ran in a great fury toward the Guru. They objected strongly to the action of the Guru and cried out that on a day of eclipse according to Shastras, it was a great sin to prepare meat at the holy place. The Guru said, "Why are you so adverse to meat? We are conceived in flesh and live in flesh. When a *Jiva* is born, he gets flesh with bones and skin; he gets milk through flesh. The mouth is of flesh, the tongue is of flesh and the breath is within the flesh. When one gets older, he is married with flesh. The flesh is born out of flesh. All the relations are with flesh". The Guru argued further, "The fool quarrels regarding meat and does not understand the reality. What is meat and what is *saag* (spinache) and who is the sinner?We are conceived and born out of flesh and are the pots of flesh. You do not understand the reality, O so-called Pandit.....You do not understand the source of this meat (flesh)". These words of the Guru occurring in *Malār kī Vār* had their effect and the priests retired after knowing about the firm convictions of the Guru. The place where the Guru

sat and held the discussion about meat with the priests is known as "Siddh Batti". There is a Gurdwara at the site.

From Kurukshetra the Guru reached Karnal. A Gurdwara in the bazar commemorates the visit of the Guru to this place. Then the Guru visited Panipat where he held discussions with Sheikh Shamal Din, the disciple of Sheikh Sharaf-ul-Din, the Muslim divine. After this the Guru crossed the boundary of the Punjab and went to the eastern states of India.

On his return journey, the Guru again passed through Haryana and is said to have visited Rewari, Gurgaon, Jhajjar, Dojana, Karoli, etc. It is also suggested by some chroniclers that the Guru visited Karnal, Kurukshetra, Pehowa while returning from the first journey. Then at Bahaur the Guru held discussions with Yogis and at Jind with Valshnavas. After this the Guru went to Samana, Bhagalpur, Cheeka, Khrauti, Kamalpur (near Dirba) Chhitanwala, Jagraon, Malerkotla, Qadirabad (Bhsaur), Akoi Sahib and thence visited Mangwal in Sangrur district. It is said that the Guru held a congregation at village Cheeka (about 20 miles from Patiala). Ultimately the Guru reached Sultanpur in 1509.

During his second journey to the South, the Guru passed through Patti and other villages and reached Kasur. Here he met Sheikh Abdul Qudas, Sheikh Mohammad Sadiq and Sheikh Abu Shiya, the Muslim divines and held several discourses. Then the Guru visited Dharamkot and Bhatinda. At Bhatinda he met Ratan Haji. In this Malwa region the Guru visited several places including Haripur (where there is a tank known as Bat Tirath), Takhtupura in Tehsil Moga (where there is a Gurdwara named Nanak Sar). It is said that the Guru met the descendants of Gopi Chand and Bharthari at Takhtupura and gave them

necessary instructions. The hymns addressed to them are found in the *Adi Granth*. The Guru also visited Gobind Garh (Moga) (where there is a Gurdwara named Gobind Garh), Patto village (where there is a memorial named "Guru Sar" and Matte di Sarai the birth place of the second Guru). After visiting the above mentioned places, the Guru went to Sirsa and thence entered Rajasthan.

On his return from the second journey, the Guru visited Multan (in West Punjab—West Pakistan) which is a city of Muslim Faqirs. The Guru saw the Memorial of Prehlad Bhagat and then went to the mosque of Shamas Tabrez. The Muslim Faqirs of the city had already heard much about the spiritual greatness of the Guru and, therefore, thought that if the Guru settled there, nobody would pay reverence to them. They presented a bowl full of milk, which signified that the city was already full of Faqirs. The Guru put a *Chameli* flower on the milk and signified that like the flower he would remain above any involvement and no harm would come to them. The Faqirs were pleased to know this. The noted Muslim divines like Hazrat Mahabal Hakk, Shah Sharaf Sani and Khwaja Moman Din 'Sadā Suhagan' met the Guru and held religious discussions. There is a memorial of the Guru named Manji Sahib.

After Multan the Guru passed through Uch (in Sind) the village Farid, Shorkot, Ram Chaudhra, Kamalia, Sheikhupura, Pindi of Sheikh Musa, Jhang, Sialkot and Tulamba. The Pirs of Multan came to Uch with Guru Sahib and remained in his company for some time. At Sialkot, the Guru met Bhai Mula, who accompanied him up to Tulamba. At Tulamba, the Guru met Sajjan, who is commonly known as Sajjan Thug, because he used to deceive people under the guise of a devout Muslim. He treated the Guru and his companions with great respect, but

at night he and his men caught hold of Mardana, thinking him as the treasurer of Guru's wealth and threatened him to surrender the cash or face death. The Guru came to the rescue of Mardana and with his powerful words converted the sinner to his faith. Sheikh Sajjan later on became the principal preacher of Sikhism. Nowadays Tulamba is known as Makhsoodpur in Tehsil Kabir. A memorial now stands at the place where the Guru met Sajjan.

From Multan and its neighbouring areas the Guru proceeded towards Talwandi, Sultanpur and Pakkhole (the home town of his in-laws). After staying for a few days at these places the Guru went with his companions to the place on the bank of the Ravi river which is now the site of Kartarpur. This place belonged to a landlord named Karoria who at first showed great aversion for the mission of Guru Nanak but later on when he met the Guru he was a changed man. He gifted the above piece of land to Guru Nanak and requested him to come and stay there. The Guru also liked the wide stretch and the natural beauty of the place and made up his mind to bring his family there. Some hut were constructed by Karoria and his men while the Guru went to Talwandi and Sultanpur and brought the members of his family. He named the place Kartarpur or the city of the Creator.

After staying for some time at Kartarpur, the Guru started for his third journey in the Himalayas in 1514 A. D. He passed through Noorpur, Sujampur, Kangra (now in Himachal Pradesh) etc. and reached Jawalamukhi (now in Himachal Pradesh). From Jawalamukhi the Guru proceeded towards Dharamsala (now in Himachal Pradesh). On his return journey the Guru passed through Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Jullundur and reached Sultanpur. From there he went to Kartarpur and stayed there for some time.

In 1517 A. D. the Guru started on his fourth journey towards Middle East. After leaving Kartarpur the Guru passed through Sultanwind (now a part of Amritsar) and reached Verka. There is a tank named Nanaksar at the place where the Guru stayed. He also visited village Lohar on the request of the inhabitants of that place. There is a Gurdwara named Dera Sahib in the memory of the Guru. This village is at a distance of about ten miles from Tarn Taran. The Guru also visited the villages named Ajnala, Ramdas, Veroke and Udoke. The famous Sikh of the Guru named Baba Budha belonged to Ramdas. There is a Gurdwara in the village which commemorates the meeting of Guru Nanak with Baba Budha. In village Veroke the Guru sat under a Ber Tree and there is a Gurdwara named Ber Baba Nanak. In village Udoke near Kathu Nagal there is a Gurdwara named Than Sahib.

Passing through Lahore district the Guru touched Eminabad again. Then he went to Wazirabad. Here he met Taru Popat, who asked for the Guru's blessings. The Guru blessed him, but asked him the reason of his *Vairagya* (detachment) at such a young age because he was still a boy. The boy replied that one day he noticed small pieces of wood catching fire promptly than the larger ones, therefore, he feared that he might also be consumed earlier by the flames of death than the older people. This was the cause of his *Vairagya*. The Guru was very much pleased and gave him the necessary instructions. Taru Popat later on became a *Jiwan-mukta* and a famous disciple of the Guru. The Guru also visited village Chutala at a distance of about nine kos from Eminabad. A Sikh temple stands at the site.

From Wazirabad, the Guru went to Gujrat where he met Jahangir Shah, a Muslim divine. The Guru visited Ker Bhag di

near Mangat in Gujrat district and brought the conceited yogi of the place to the right path. The next place where the Guru stopped was Rohtas. In order to satiate the thirst of Mardana the Guru dug up a spring of sweet water. It is said that in 1542 A.D. when Sher Shah Suri built a fort at the place he tried to include the spring in the fort but he failed. This sacred spring is still there by the side of the outer wall of the fort.

From Rohtas the Guru went to Tilla Bal Gundaī. Bal Gundaī was a yogi who lived at the summit of the hill. He was one of the prominent Kanphata Yogis of his time. He received the Guru with great reverence. The Guru left a deep impression on the Yogi and his disciples. There is also a shrine to commemorate the visit of the Guru to this place.

The Guru is also said to have visited Katās, a holy place of the Hindus and Chohan Saidan Shah. He passed through Pothohar and went to Hassan Abdal. At this place a Muslim divine Wali Kandhari lived on the summit of a hill. There was a spring of cool water at the summit. Mardana felt very thirsty and went to Wali for water but the Muslim Faqir was full of ego. He refused to give water to Mardana on the pretext that he was a companion of a Hindu saint. In order to satiate the thirst of Mardana the Guru dug up a spring at the foot of the hill. The spring of the Wali was dried up, who in great fury pushed a large rock down the hill which was stopped against the stretched hand of the Guru. The impression of Guru's hand is still seen by the side of the spring and the Sikh temple built on the site is known as 'Panja Sahib'.

The Guru visited Pak Pattan again during this journey, where he is said to have met Sheikh Ibrahim (or Sheikh Brahm) the spiritual descendant of Baba Farid Shakar Ganj. There is a Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in the memory of the Guru's visit at a

distance of about two miles from the city. The Guru then went to Dipalpur where he cured two lepers Naurang and Noori. The tree under which the Guru sat is still there. A Gurdwara named Dehra Sahib also exists. At Mehmudpur (or Tibba Abohar), about twelve miles from Pak Pattan, the Guru met a Muslim divine named Chishti. There is a Gurdwara at the place. At Harappa where the Guru went, there is a Gurdwara named "Nanaksar" or "Dera Baba Nanak".

The Guru also passed through Jalalpur, Haran Pur, Kheora, Pind Dadan Khan, Dera Ismail Khan (in N.W.F.P.), Dera Ghazi Khan etc., and thence entered Sind.

On his return journey the Guru passed through the hilly district of Hazara (in West Punjab). The Guru visited Ram Kund (now called Saidpur) and met a Muslim divine at a village nearby. The present name of this village is Nurpurshahan. Passing through the hilly areas of Kashmir, the Guru reached Sialkot. He went to meet his old disciple Bhai Mula, but the wife of that unfortunate Sikh concealed him in a small cell, where a serpent bit him and he died.

It was Samvat 1578 or A.D. 1521 when Babar had attacked India. He was proceeding towards Delhi with his forces. The Guru had reached Eminabad (or Saidpur) where a general massacre had been ordered by the invader. The Guru was arrested along with other faqirs. All the arrested prisoners were ordered to grind corn. The Guru's grindstone began to revolve itself. This news spread like wild fire. The king himself came to meet the Guru. He recognised the saint whom he had already met at Kabul. The Guru was released but he procured the release of all the arrested faqirs. The prophecy of the Guru was fulfilled with the invasion of Babar. The pitiable condition of the Pathans and Hindus at the time of the invasion of Babar has been depicted in a few hymns of the Guru.

From Eminabad, the Guru returned to Kartarpur and finally settled there. The people from far and near began to flock together to Kartarpur for spiritual instructions. In 1522, both the parents of the Guru left for heavenly abode. Bhai Gurdas has written that the Guru went to Multan and Achal Vatala after settling down at Kartarpur. At Achal Vatala, he held long discussions with the *Yogis*, some of which are contained in his hymn "Siddh Goshta". Bhai Lehna (who became Guru Angad, the second Sikh Guru) came to the Guru at Kartarpur and became his disciple. In A.D. 1539 the Guru left for the region of Truth "Sach Khand" after announcing that Bhai Lehna would be his spiritual descendant.

During his journeys the Guru visited the areas of the Punjab several times. We cannot be definite whether the Guru visited a particular area on his outward journey or inward journey. But his memorials preserved at different places are an evidence of his wide travels in the Punjab.

DELHI

In 1501 A.D. the Guru reached Delhi v/a Karnal and Hardwar. Delhi has remained the capital of India for centuries. When the Guru reached Delhi, Sikandar Lodhi was the king of India. His high-handedness because of his religious intolerance has been recorded by most of the historians. The Guru entered Delhi from the west. Just as he was entering the suburban area, he noticed some people sitting by the side of the road, tired and thirsty. It is said that he himself drew water from the nearby well for the thirsty travellers. A memorial still exists around that well which is known as Gurdwara Nanak Piao or Gurdwara Khui Sahib.

From Nanak Piao the Guru went to the bank of river Yamuna. A Muslim divine named Majnu lived on the bank. He had become very weak by continuous meditation and wanted someone to help him in fulfilling his acute desire for God realization. In fact, he had been waiting for the great Guru for the purpose. Guru Nanak initiated Majnu into the deep mysteries of the Lord. The disciple danced with ecstasy and became one of the foremost preachers of Sikh faith. The Guru stayed with Majnu for some days. Several Muslim divines came to listen the religious discourses of the Guru and hold discussions with him. The prominent Muslims who met the Guru were Hassan Abdulla, the disciple of Nizam-ud-Din Auliya, Miyan Maduf and Sayyad Mande Shah. Raghodas Vairagi, Ude Nath Yogi and Aghar Nath were some of the Hindu saints who were benefitted by the company of the Guru. The edge of the rock on which stood the hut of Majnu is known as *Majnu Da Tilla*. Now there stands a Gurdwara at the site which commemorates the visit of the Guru.

The fame of the Guru had spread throughout the city. It is recorded in old *Janamsakhi* that the Guru passed one night with the elephant drivers of the king. The name of the king is given as Braham Beg or Ibrahim Beg. Ibrahim Lodhi ruled from 1517-1526 and died in the battle of Panipat while fighting against Babar. There is no other record to show that the Guru visited Delhi for a second time in the reign of Ibrahim Lodhi. We can safely assume that the chronicler has been mistaken in giving the above-mentioned name of the king in connection with the very start of the first journey of the Guru. Sikandar Lodhi was the ruler of Delhi during his visit.

On the night of the stay of the Guru with the elephant drivers of the king, one of the elephants fell dead. There was weeping and wailing all around. The Guru asked the cause of this lamentation. He was told about the death of the elephant with the remarks that the elephant driver depended on the elephant for his livelihood and it was not possible for him to sustain after the death of the elephant. The Guru forbade them from crying and asked them to utter the Name of the Lord and pray for compassion. The prayer was heard and the elephant came back to life. This matter was reported to the king who mounted on the same elephant and came to the Guru. He asked the Guru to kill the elephant and vivify it again. The Guru said, "The destroyer and vivifier is God Himself. He listens to the prayers of his devotees".

Though the chronicler has ended the above story without mentioning any further action of the king, the other chroniclers agree that the Guru was arrested and put into jail along with other *Faqirs*, who could not show a miracle. The Guru was asked to grind corn like other prisoners but it so happened that all the grind-stones of the prisoners began to revolve themselves. The matter was reported to the king, who came personally to

beg for forgiveness. At the bidding of the Guru, he released all the prisoners. The Guru then instructed the king to follow the path of truth and justice and hinted that if this path was not followed, the king of Khurasan would invade India. It has been recorded by Pandit Tara Singh Narotam in his "Gur Tirath Sangreh" that he had heard about the "Tharra Sahib" within the precincts of Lahori Gate, where the Guru took compassion on the elephant drivers and revived the dead elephant.

UTTAR PRADESH

Guru Nanak passed through Uttar Pradesh twice, once during his first journey towards the East and then during his third journey in the mountains. During his first journey, the Guru covered the plains in the Gangetic valley and in his third journey, he covered the mountains and the hilly tracts which include the areas called *Tarai*. Uttar Pradesh is the biggest state of India along the foothills of Himalayas. It covers an area of 1,13,409 square miles and is the most thickly populated state.

From Karnal in the Punjab, the Guru crossed to Uttar Pradesh. The first holy place, the Guru visited in U. P. was Hardwar, the ancient *Māyāpuri*. It is one of the seven sacred cities of the Hindus. It is situated on the banks of the holy Ganges. It is said to be the Ganges, first and last, because there are no great temples in this city. This holy place is also called *Gangdwara*, because at this place the Ganges descends from the Himalayas.

Guru Nanak visited Hardwar in 1501 A.D. when the Kumbh Fair was being celebrated. While Mardana played upon his rebeck, the Guru sang one of his hymns. The Sannyasis, Vairagis, Vaishnavas, Shaivas, Yogis, and Pandits gathered around the Guru and held discussions but soon gave in. Raja Bijai Prakash of Garhwal was very much impressed. A Gurdwara named Nanak-wari exists on the bank of the river.

From Hardwar, the Guru proceeded to Delhi *via* Kotdwara, Najibabad and Anupshahr in U.P. At Kotdwara, there is a

Gurdwara *Charan Padka* in the memory of the Guru. At Haldor in Bijnor district, there is a platform in the memory of the Guru. It is known as 'Babe Nanak di Dheri'. The Sikhs have erected a Gurdwara near it. From Delhi, he again entered U.P. and visited Koil (the present city of Aligarh). Then he turned towards Mathura, the birth place of Lord Krishna, famous as the eighth incarnation of Vishnu. This holy city is situated on the bank of Yamuna. This city and its suburbs Gokul and Vrindavana have been hallowed by Lord Krishna, the most darling deity of the Hindus. Guru Nanak visited all the holy sites of Mathura and Vrindavana. There are twelve *vanas* which surround Mathura, out of which Vrindavana is the most celebrated of all. Here Lord Krishna passed his days as cowherd and lifted Govardhan on his little finger. Several stories about Lord Krishna are connected with this holy place, which inspire the devotees. Guru Nanak gave his message to the priests and pilgrims about the only Lord and Truth, i.e., Brahman. There is a Gurdwara at Bisram Ghat, Mathura which commemorates the visit of Guru Nanak and the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur to this place. Mathura has a great historical significance. At one time the Buddhist kings ruled over this city. It is said to have been burnt by Rama's brother Satrugana and was the capital of Saurasena country. It was called 'Suryapur' by Jainas. It was the birth place of Bhagavata religion and centre of Vishnu cult.

From Mathura, the Guru went to Agra, where the place hallowed by the stay of the Guru is called "Guru ki Dharamsala". It is situated in Loha Mandi. Some chroniclers have recorded that an old lady 'Mai Jassi' became a Sikh of the Guru and a great preacher of Sikhism in the area. The house where this lady lived is now Gurdwara, known as Gurdwara Mai Than. But the management of the Gurdwara has recorded on a tablet

in the precincts of the Gurdwara that 'Mai Jassi' lived in the time of Guru Teg Bahadur and met him when he visited this place.

While going to Kanpur and Lucknow from Agra, the Guru passed through Etawa. There is a Gurdwara at Etawa, but no memorials exist at the other two places. The Guru is also said to have visited Bithur, situated at a distance of 14 miles from Kanpur. This place contains the hermitage of sage Valmiki where the two sons of Rama, i.e., Lav and Kush were born. This holy hermitage is known as Brahmavarta. At Lucknow, a site near Lal Bagh is being mentioned for erecting a suitable memorial for the visit of the Guru. It is said that the Guru stayed at this place.

From Lucknow the Guru went to Ayodhya, a place of great historical importance, not only for Vaishnavas, but also for Buddhists and Jainas. It is one of the seven holy places of Hindus. At times it was known as Sāketa, Ikṣvākubhūmi, Rāmapuri and Koshala. The first and fourth Tirthankaras of Jainas were born here. In Ramayana, it has been mentioned as the capital of Koshala. The story of Rama is connected with this city. His father Dasrath ruled over this city. He himself was born in it and later on ruled over it. He was the sixth famous incarnation of Vishnu. Guru Nanak held discussions with the religious leaders of the place and preached to the people the tenets of his faith. There are two Gurdwaras at this place, one on the banks of Ghaghra (Saryu) river and the other near the Vashishtha Kund.

From Ayodhya, the Guru went to Allahabad or Prayagaraja *via* Jaunpur. Prayagaraja is very ancient sacred place of the Hindus. Its sanctity is even mentioned in Rig Veda. It is said that who soever bathes at the confluence of Ganga and

Yamuna, goes to heaven; whosoever discards his mortal frame here, attains immortality. The confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible river Saraswati is known as "Triveni" and "Sangam". The Guru stayed for some time at the Sangam and through his sermons deprecated the formalism and ritualism. He spoke against the common belief that one should have a shave or tonsure at Prayag. In pursuance of this belief the men and widows shaved off their hair, the men offered their beards and moustaches. The Guru pointed to the futility and worthlessness of such a ritual and advised the people to follow the right path. There is no memorial of the Guru at this place. It is said that the Guru stayed for some time at an Akhara by the side of Triveni. Some say that he stayed for some time at the site where stands now the Gurdwara of the ninth Guru.

From Allahabad, the Guru followed the course of the river Ganges and reached Banaras which is also known as Varanasi and Kashi. It is the eternal city of the Hindus and the most prominent centre of pilgrimage. This holy city or holy Kashi is associated with Shiva like holy Ganges. It is the earthly abode of Lord Shiva. It is also the most famous seat of learning. Lord Buddha also selected it as the fittest place for turning his wheel of law.

At Banaras the Guru stayed in the garden of Pandit Gopal Shastri, where now stands a Gurdwara named Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh. When the learned Pandits of Kashi came to know about the Guru's visit, they came to discuss with him the salient features of his new religion in the light of the Shastric injunctions. The chief Pandit was Chaturdās. In the discussion that ensued, the Guru plainly told the Pandits that it was of no use to water the barren soil and to whitewash the mud wall which was about to fall down shortly. He admonished

- them for wasting away their precious birth through useless tasks. It is said that the Guru uttered his four Sahaskriti Shlokas at that time.

It is recorded by Gyani Gyan Singh that Namdev, Trilochan, Ravidas, Parsa, Hanso Rai, Dharam Das, Nityanand etc. came to see the Guru. Kabir was not at Kashi at that time. He had gone to Ragunath Pura to meet his disciple Nawab Bijli Khan. The meeting of Namdev and Trilochan, the Maharashtrian saints with Guru Nanak, is doubtful, though not improbable. It is very often argued that Namdev and Kabir preceded Guru Nanak and were not his contemporaries. But it is recorded by Dharam Das, the disciple of Kabir in his book "Nanak Prabodh" that Kabir and Nanak met in A.D. 1501 at village Pusa near Banaras. According to him Kabir was born in A.D. 1398, met Ramanand in 1405, married in 1414, the son Kamala born in 1424, the daughter Kamali born in 1428, his *yagna* was performed by God Himself in 1435 in the guise of Kabir, his hands and feet were tied and he was thrown in the Ganges by the order of Sikandar Lodhi in 1488 and he died at Maghar in A.D. 1518. These dates clearly prove that Guru Nanak and Kabir met in their lifetime. Similarly there is a possibility of a meeting of Namdev and Guru Nanak.

Kabir, Ravidas and Nityanand were the disciples of Ramanand and Hanso Rai and Dharam Das, the disciples of Kabir. All these saints are said to have met Guru Nanak.

From Banaras, the Guru made an incursion into Mirzapur district. He is said to have stayed at Mirzapur for a few days. There is said to be a Gurdwara near Mirzapur which commemorates the visit of the Guru in this area. From Mirzapur the Guru returned to Baharas and left for Bihar following the course of the river Ganges. In the way he entered Azamgarh district. A memorial at Nizamabad commemorates his visit.

During his third journey in the Himalayas, the Guru entered the Holy Kedar Kshetra in Uttar Pradesh from Himachal Pradesh. This holy area from the Shipki pass to the Lipu Lekh pass near the northern frontier of Nepal, belonged to the kingdoms of Brahmapura of Garhwal and Kumaon. It is considered as the border land of India. Hieun Tsiang visited this Kshetra in A.D. 634 coming from Hardwar in the south.

After visiting Chakrata and Dehra Dun in the Garhwal hills, the Guru came down to Hardwar. It seems that the famous incident of Hardwar regarding the offering of water to the Sun, occurred in this journey because the Guru had settled his family at Kartarpur on the land donated to him by his disciple Karoria. It is said that the pilgrims were offering water to the *Pitris* (forefathers) in the sun, the Guru began to offer water in a different direction. He was questioned by the Pandits. They said that they performed a ritual and according to the Shastras, these rituals had their effect. Therefore their offering of water reached their *Pitris*. The Guru argued with them that if their offering reached millions of miles away, his offering of water to his fields at Kartarpur could easily reach there in no time. In this way, he silenced the protagonists of *Karma Kanda*, who understood the significance of the Guru's argument.

From Hardwar, the Guru travelled through the holy Kedara Bhūmi. After passing through Rikhikesh, he reached Tehri. A Sikh Dharamsala at Tehri reminds us of the Guru's visit to this place. From Tehri the Guru moved to Dharasu which is a junction for going to Yamnotri and Gangotri, the places of origin of Yamuna and Ganga (Ganges). From Dharasu, he proceeded to Gangotri passing through Uttara Kashi. It is from Gangotri region that the ancient passes lead pilgrims to the sacred lake of Mansarovar and Mount Kailash in Tibet. Here the Indian frontier comes to an end. The Guru visited lake

Mansarovar and Mount Kailash and then returned to Tehri. From Tehri the Guru came to Sri Nagar in Pauri Garhwal for his journey to Badrinath and Kedarnath. At Sri Nagar, there is a Gurdwara in the memory of the visit of the Guru. It is known as "Charan Padka". The Guru is said to have admonished a proud and haughty Pandit here and put him on the right path.

Badrinath is the famous shrine of Lord Vishnu and Kedarnath of Lord Shiva. Badrinath is at a distance of 183 miles from Hardwar and Kedarnath at a distance of 149 miles. There are several small stations in the way. At Badrinath, there is a Dharamsala in the name of the Guru. From Badrinath, the Guru is said to have gone to Basudhar and Hem Kunt. He is said to have crossed several mountains and met the yogis and saints residing there.

After his visit to Badrinath and Kedarnath, the Guru returned to the hilly area at the foot of Himalaya in Almora district. There is still a platform with an inscription and a Nishan (flag) commemorating the visit of the Guru near Bageshwar. At Almora, there is a 'Sangat' which commemorates his visit. At this place the Raja desired to present Mardana as a sacrifice to the goddess, but he was saved by the Guru. There is a Gurdwara at this place.

From Almora district, the Guru entered Naini Tal district and attended the fair at Garh Mukteshwar. Then he passed through Naini Tal. There is a platform at about two miles from Naini Tal which is known as "Nanak Thagha". At Kashipur in Naini Tal district, a Gurdwara has been recently built on the site where the Guru stayed and it has been named "Nankana Sahib". A few miles from Haldwani, there is a Ber tree under which the Guru is said to have rested awhile. It is held sacred in his memory.

The next important place visited by Guru Nanak was Gorakhmatta, which after his victory over the yogis was named 'Nanak Matta'. The Guru went straight to the abode of the yogis. He sat under a dried up Peepal tree, which became green with his touch. There was extreme cold during the night. One of the companions of the Guru went to fetch fire from the yogis who flatly refused to help. Instead they admonished him with the remark that if his Guru had any power, he can produce a fire for himself. A great storm arose by then and all the fires of yogis were extinguished and a big fire began to burn near the Guru and his companions. The yogis now came to take fire from the Guru but had to leave the ear rings and the wooden sandals of their Guru as pawn. When the day dawned, they all gathered around the Guru for a discussion. They tried to make the Peepal tree, under which the Guru sat, fly away through their miraculous powers. The roots of tree had just gone about five-six feet above the ground, when the Guru made a sign and the tree became still there and then. The tree is still there. Later on a platform was built around the roots. The site on which the tree stands is known as 'Panja Ji' by the old inhabitants of U. P.

Because of the above incident the yogis felt themselves defeated and began to show miracles and tease the Guru and his companions. The Guru kept silent for some time and then ordered his wooden sandal to give a good beating to the yogis and bring them in his presence. This was done. The yogis felt highly ashamed. The Guru advised them to leave the practice of performing miracles. It was against the will of the Lord and became obstruction in the spiritual development.

Still the yogis performed another miracle. They dried up water in all the wells by their power and requested the Guru to

provide water for their bath. The Guru gave his stick to his companion Mardana and sent him to the nearby river and asked him to draw a line without break and the river would follow him. He was further advised not to look behind. Mardana did as he was bidden but when he was about two furlongs from the Guru, he looked behind wondering whether the river was following him or not. The flow of the river stopped there and then. Now the Guru asked the yogis to bring the river to his seat but they could do nothing. The Guru asked them to see if the water had come in their wells. And to their amazement the wells were full of water.

The streamlet which was brought to Nanak Matta has now become a part of 'Nanak Sagar' and the sacred well near the Guru's resting place has been turned into a Baoli amidst Nanak Sagar and is connected with the bank through a bridge. The Peepal tree which was burnt by the jealous yogis later on, again sprout forth new leaves when the sixth Guru sprinkled water mixed with saffron over it. It is said that the marks of saffron are still seen on its leaves. A splend Gurdwara has been built by the Sikhs of the area and named it Gurdwara Sri Nanak Matta. Besides the Sikhs from far and near this place is visited with great faith and devotion by thousands of local inhabitants known as Tharus. These Tharus make offerings to the Guru and take away the wood-ash from the free kitchen, which they carry round their necks in amulets.

About 25 miles from Nanak Matta and about 40 from Haldwani, there is another spot visited by the Guru. It is known as "Rethā Sāhib". The yogis were preparing meals and the hungry Mardana wanted food. The yogis refused and instead asked him to take food from the Guru. The Guru asked Mardana to climb on the soapnut tree and eat the fruit. The fruit, otherwise bitter, became sweet when the Guru made sign towards it. The fruit of the same tree which was on the side

of the yogis remained bitter. About seven miles from the site of "Rethā Sahib", the sweetened soapnuts are sown and the place is known as "Nanak Bagichi".

It is said that the Guru visited Bareilly also. It is also reported that during his trip to or from Nanak Matta the Guru stayed at Tanda which is inhabited by *Wanjaras*.

The Guru crossed Pilibhit district and entered Kheri district. It is said that for the sake of a leper, who remembered the Guru with faith and devotion, the Guru came to Koriala-ghat. The original name of the place was Kohri-wala-ghat which changed to Korialaghat after some time.

Then the Guru is said to have visited Naimisharanya. It is situated in Sitapur district on the bank of Gomti river. The ancient Hindu sages, who wrote the Puranas lived here. Then the Guru visited Ayodhya, which fell in the way on the bank of Saryu river, for the second time. From Ayodhya, he went to Gorakhpur, where he had a discussions with the yogis. A Dharamsala commemorates the visit of the Guru to this place. From Gorakhpur district, the Guru entered Deoria district. It is reported that at a distance of about two kos from Deoria, there is a memorial commemorating the visit of the Guru.

BIHAR

Like Uttar Pradesh, Guru Nanak touched the Bihar territory twice, once during his first journey and then during the third journey. During his first journey, he followed the course of the Ganges and entered Bihar at Buxur (the old Siddh Ashram). Then passing through Arrah and Chhapra, he reached Patna, the old Patliputra. It is situated on the south bank of the Ganges. He attended the fair of Harihar Kshetra about three miles from Patna on the north bank of Ganges, where he attracted the people by his sermons of love. When he reached Patna, the people flocked round him in order to take advantage of the presence of the saint in the city. There was a talk about the invaluable gem of the human birth. Mardana wanted to know why the people talked about it but did not attempt seriously to cross the ocean of Samsara. The next day, when Mardana felt hungry, the Guru gave him a gem to purchase the eatables with it. The gem was found by the Guru when he was erasing the earth with his stick. The gem was shown in the vegetable market. The vegetable seller would give one radish for it, the sweetmeat seller half a kilo of sweets and a draper two yards of cloth. Then the goldsmiths offered money ranging from rupees five to one hundred. The jewellers offered thousands but one of the jewellers said that the gem was worth millions and he gave one hundred rupees for having a look at it. Mardana brought one hundred rupees and the gem before the Guru. The Guru asked Mardana to return the money. The jeweller refused to take it back and came to see the Guru. His name was Salas Rai. He became a disciple of the Guru and kept

him in his house for four months. But Adhraka, the servant of Salas Rai showed greater signs of spiritual advancement. While leaving Patna the Guru asked Salas Rai to accept Adhraka as his elder in the spiritual domain. This was the beginning of a Sikh Sangat in Patna. The Haveli of Salas Rai where the Guru stayed was so much hallowed by the visit of the Guru that the ninth Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur stayed here before proceeding to Kamrup and Guru Gobind Singh the tenth Guru was born at this place. At present there stands a majestic Gurdwara known as Gurdwara Janam Asthan. There is another Gurdwara known as Pachhmi Darwaza Sangat. The Guru stayed here for some time.

From Patna, the Guru went to Rajgir, the old Rajagṛha. It is said to be one of the oldest cities of India. It had been the capital of Jarasandh. It is considered sacred because it had long association with Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira. It is famous in the history of Buddhism because 500 Buddhist elders met here to fix the Buddhist canon. It lies at a distance of about sixty miles to the south-east of Patna in the same district. The Guru held long discussions with the Buddhist and Jaina monks and also followers of Sankhya and Mimamsa Shastras. He plainly told them that they would not get release without the devotion towards the Lord. This had the desired effect. The Guru visited the springs of hot water in the town which were named after gods viz. Shiva Kund, Brahma Kund, Vishnu Kund etc. The cool drinking water was not available. The people requested the Guru for a spring of cold water. On the advice of the Guru, the people dug a place and the cool drinking water gushed forth. This spring is known as "Nanak Kund".

From Rajgir, the Guru proceeded to Gaya, which lies at a distance of about sixty miles south of Patna. This place is sacred to Brahmanical Hindus. Its boundary extends to

Pretasila in the north and to Bodhidruma at Bodh Gaya in the south, according to Gaya Mahatamya. The Brahmins considered it a separate tract in order to differentiate it from Magadha which was a stronghold of Buddhism. When the Guru reached Gaya, the Pandas (or Pandits) asked him to engage them to perform the ritual regarding *Pitris*. They had to prepare balls from barley flour and set the earthen lamps afloat for the comfort of the dead. The Guru told them that his earthen lamp was the Name of the Lord and admonished them for such practices and advised them to discard such wrong pursuits and follow the path of the remembrance of the Name of the Lord. At Gaya there is a Sikh temple in the memory of the Guru at Bahmani Ghat.

From Gaya, the Guru went to Bodh Gaya or the old Uruvela, where Lord Buddha realized the futility of penances. He gave them up and meditated for several weeks under a banyan tree. The banyan tree still stands in the compound of the Bodhi temple at Bodh Gaya. The name Bodh Gaya was given to the place after the attainment of enlightenment by Lord Buddha differentiating it from Brahmanical Gaya. At Bodh Gaya, the Guru enunciated his doctrines before the Buddhist monks. The Mahant Devagiri was highly impressed and adopted the discipline ordained by the Guru.

From Bodh Gaya, the Guru reached Monghyr or the old Mudgagiri. Al-Beruni has given its name as Mungiri. There is a Gurdwara at the site where the Guru stayed. Then following the course of the river Ganges, the Guru visited Bhagalpur, Sahibganj and Rajmahal. At Bhagalpur, there is a Gurdwara in the memory of the visit of Guru Nanak and Guru Tegh Bahadur like Monghyr. From Bhagalpur he seems to have travelled southwards and crossing the boundary of Bhagalpur district reached Vaidyanathdham in Deoghar town of Santal

Parganas.. Vaidyanath Jyotirlingam is one of the twelve Jyotirlingams. The word Vaidyanath means the Lord of the Vaidyas or doctors. It is said that when the creation of Brahma was on the verge of destruction, he propitiated Shiva who saved the humanity. From that day Shiva is known as Vaidyanatha. Shiva is reported to have said that the water of the Ganges is the remedy of all diseases.

Some people believe that leprosy vanishes away after the patient stays at Vaidyanathdham for some time. That is the reason why many lepers come to this place. After visiting this place the Guru returned to Bhagalpur and then proceeded to Sahibganj and Rajmahal wherefrom he crossed the borders of Bihar and entered Bengal.

During his third journey in the Himalayas and Tarai area, the Guru passed through the districts of northern Bihar. In Muzaffarpur district he visited Sitamarhi, a sacred place in memory of Sita, from where he went to Janakpur (Mithila) in Nepal territory.

In Bihar, round about Patna district, we still find *Nanak Shahi Sangats*. There is a sect of Bihar people who are called *Vedis* and who are said to be associated with *Bari Sangat* or *Nanak Shahi Sangat*. These Sangats have their own Mahants (or religious leaders). In Patna itself there are *Bari Sangats* in Pachhmi Darwaza, Rakab Ganj and Malsalari Thana. There is a Sangat of (Guru) Nanak in Barh near Rajgir.

BENGAL

At the time of partition in 1947, Bengal was divided into two units like the Punjab. The West Bengal became a state of India and East Bengal a state of Pakistan. The latter is now a separate republic and is named Bangla Desh. But with regard to our subject we will treat only the united Bengal. In the early sixteenth century, the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were parts of Delhi Sultanate. Bengal, Assam and other Indian states had not come under its sway. Therefore in Bengal, there were no signs of religious persecution. The ruler at that time was Hussein Shah "The Good". Later on when the Mughals conquered Bengal, the Viceroy did not interfere with the religious practices of the Hindus. This is the reason why several Sikh Sangats were established in the area after the visit of Guru Nanak in the first decade of sixteenth century. There were several prosperous Sikh Sangats from Rajmahal to Sylhet and from Dhubri to Banskhal. Because of the non-interference with their religion, a good number of Nanak panthis migrated to Bengal from U. P. and Bihar.

At the time of Guru Nanak's visit in Bengal, Rajmahal was the seat of Government, which was transferred later on in 1608 by Islam Khan, the viceroy of Bengal to Dacca; one of the reasons was the change in the course of river Ganges. From Rajmahal, the Guru travelled to Malda (in A.D. 1504), where he stayed in the garden of Ram Babu. This garden is known as "Guru ka Bagh". Here the Guru stayed for a few days. This place is famous for a very fine variety of mangoes called Malda. Then

he crossed the Ganges for Murshidabad, where there is nowadays a Dharamsala in the name of Guru Nanak. The Sikh weavers of silk cloth live at this place. From Murshidabad (the old Makhsudabad), the Guru proceeded to Krishnanagar (Nadia) passing through Kasganj and Navadvip. A meeting of young Chaitanya with Guru Nanak at Navadvip is probable. From Krishnanagar, the Guru entered East Bengal (East Pakistan) and passing through Faridpur district, he reached Dacca. He attracted the notice of several Hindu and Muslim divines who gathered round him for religious discussions. The prominent among the saints who met the Guru were Lunia Siddha, Samai Nath, Rewa Das, Narain Das, Chandan Das and Sheikh Ahmed. They were highly impressed by the Guru's teachings. The people of the area were the worshippers of Kamakhya Devi. The Guru, with his powerful words made them meditate on ONE Lord, who is the Creator of all gods and goddesses. The descendants of those people even now follow the discipline ordained by the Guru. The cot on which the Guru sat is held sacred. It had been in the possession of management of Dharamsala of Natha Shah, about 4 kos from Dacca. This Dharamsala contains a Gurdwara in the memory of the ninth Guru. There is a Gurdwara named "Charan Padka" in Dacca in the memory of the first Guru.

S. G. B. Singh writes in his article on "Sikh Relics in Eastern Bengal". "Dacca, of course, did not exist then as such. Sonargam was the capital of the province ; and what is called Dacca now, was only the seat of Thanadar. The site of Dacca and its suburbs was covered over by a large number of insignificant villages whose names mostly survive in those of the quarters of the town uptil now. In all there existed fifty-two bazars . . . one of these 52 bazars, known as Bengalla is said to have been the most important and its fame as a centre

of trade was well-known throughout the neighbouring districts. Another important and adjoining bazar famous for its temple of the goddess Dhakeshwari was called Dhaka. From the importance of these two bazars, particularly the former, their names were accepted by the travellers.....The collection of villages was, therefore, known outside as Bengalla or Dhaka Bengalla.

"The temple of Dhakeshwari, one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in olden time lay on the way and was not simply to be passed by. Guru Nanak, therefore, broke his journey here and landed at the northernmost ghat at Rayer Bazar*. The place was probably inhabited by the poor people of the potter class as at present for it is among these people that the tradition of the Great Teacher's visit survives and a sort of devotion still lingers though the memories have long since grown vague and dim. A well commemorates this visit to the present day. Out in the waste near Jafarbad, half hidden in bramble growth, a well and a heap or two of debris are the only visible signs of the Sikh monastery that once flourished there.....The well is known as Guru Nanak's well and there is a local tradition that Guru Nanak drank from the well. The Sikh story, a little rationalized is that he dug a hole for drinking water with his pointed stick. However, that may be, the place became sacred in the eyes of the Sikhs and Sikh ascetics soon followed to establish a monastery there..... Miraculous properties have been attributed to the water of the well ever since the visit of the Guru....."

In the above description of G. B. Singh, there is mention

*Rayer Bazar was known as Sibpur village in the time of Guru Nanak according to the author of "Guru Tegh Bahadur and Assam Pradesh", Dr. Arjan Singh Mann. Sikh temple near Rayer Bazar is known as Sikhar Mandir.

of a pointed stick which the Guru had in his hand. But the Sikh chronicles mention *Barchha*, i.e., a long spear. With this spear the Guru dug a hole in the earth and a spring of cool drinking water appeared which might have later been turned into a well as described by G. B. Singh. The name of the village mentioned by him is Jafarbad but the Sikh chronicles, have given the name of Dhanpur situated at a distance of about three kos from Dacca. A very interesting incident has been narrated in the *Janamsakhis*. The people of the area practised black art and when Mardana, the companion of the Guru went inside the village, a woman named Nūr Shah is said to have turned him into a ram. The Guru came to his rescue and all the conjurers surrendered before his spiritual greatness. Nūr Shah and others became disciples of the Guru.

The above incident has very often been associated with Kamrup. In his book "The Background of Assamese Culture", Shri S. K. Bhuyan writes: "Guru Nanak, the father of the valiant Sikh community, had the bitter anguish of finding his brave Punjabi servant Mardana converted into a lamb before his very eyes, by a woman of this country, who could as well reconvert the young man to his natural anatomical shape according to her personal and private needs". The black art flourished not only in Kamrup, but also in Dhaka Bengalla.

The people of the Dhanpur village, after their surrender requested the Guru to kindly make the provision of water for them. At their request the Guru used his *Barchha* (long spear) and the cool drinking water gushed forth. The memorial that was built at this place is known as "Barchha Sahib". There is also a temple in the memory of Guru Nanak at Shujatpur (Dacca) known as "Charan Padka". There is a well in the precincts of the Gurdwara in which there is an inscription in

Gurmukhi according to which the place is of historical importance.*

From Dhanpur, the Guru proceeded towards Brahmaputra river and travelled along its banks. A mention has been made of the meeting of the Guru with a prominent saint of the area named Ramdas in a mountain cave, but the exact location of the cave could not be ascertained. The Guru visited Faridpur, Manikganj, Sirajganj etc. in East Bengal on the bank of the river. Then he entered Assam and continued his journey on the river bank.

After visiting Assam, Manipur, Tripura and other states in the East the Guru again entered East Bengal (East Pakistan). Sylhet and Karimganj which were previously part of Assam are now included in East Pakistan. The Guru visited these places while visiting Manipur and Tripura. There is a Gurdwara in Sylhet in the memory of the Guru. From Tripura, the Guru entered the Chittagong district in East Pakistan. There is a hill named Sitakund in this district. There is Sitakund (a tank named after Sita) on the summit of this hill. The water of this tank is hot. About three miles towards the north of this tank there is a sacred spring. About four miles towards the south of this tank there is Balwa Kund, a place of pilgrimage. Like Jawalamukhi (In Himachal Pradesh) the flames of fire are seen rising from the stones and the water of the tank. The Guru visited Balwa Kund Tirthā. He held discussions here with the yogis. There is a "Charan Padka" of the Guru here in memory of his visit.

From Balwa Kund in Chittagong district, the Guru proceeded towards Calcutta in West Bengal *v/a* Chandpur and Kesabpur. At Calcutta, he met the ruler Raja Bhadar Singh and removed

*See "Guru Teg Bahadur and Assam Pradesh", by Dr. Arjan Singh Mann—Sikh Publishing House, New Delhi—1st Edition, 1959 p. 152.

his troubles with his advice. Raja Hazoori Singh, the great grandson of Raja Bhadar Singh raised a memorial to commemorate the visit of the Guru at Calcutta. This memorial is now named Gurdwara Bara Sikh Sangat and is situated on Harrison Road.

The Guru is said to have toured the districts of Hooghly, 24 Parganas, Burdwan and Midnapore, including Dum Dum, Barasat, Bardwan, Midnapur, Howrah, Serampore, Chander Nagar etc. It is also probable that he visited Nadia district again and accompanied the Sannyasi of Navadvip, i.e. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Jagannatha Puri in Orissa. A Gurdwara has been erected at Midnapore in memory of the visit of the Guru.

It is probable that during his third journey when the Guru was travelling in Sikkim and Bhutan, he toured through some territory of North Bengal in Darjeeling, Jalapaiguri and Cooch. Behar districts.

ASSAM

The Guru entered Assam in 1505 A.D. from East Bengal (East Pakistan) travelling on the banks of Brahmaputra river. The first station that he reached inside the border of Assam was *Dhubri*. This area of Assam was known as Kamrup in those days. In our *Janamsakhis* it is mentioned as *Kavroo Desha*. On the eve of Guru Nanak's entry in Kamarupa, "the whole area was a desert without an oasis from the cultural viewpoint."* There was chaos and no security of life and property. There were Buddhist immigrants in the area who had found shelter here because they had been harassed by Muslims in other parts of India. They began propagating their religious ideas and used magical cures for diseases. They together with Shaivas and Shaktas were responsible for the debasement of religion to such an extent that the land became known as the land of dangerous witchcraft. The author of "The Background of Assamese Culture" says: "A state is stated to have existed in a certain part of the country inhabited only by women, governed by a woman ruler, with the help of her women ministers and soldiers, and any male stranger unknowingly stepping into it was sapped to death. Another state is said to have existed in another part of the country, inhabited by a peculiar type of human beings specially designed by God with only one leg to hop about and with ears as large as winnowing fans". The author says further: "Such was the unfortunate state to which the major portion of the once renowned Kamarupa Empire, the glowing jewel amongst the eastern states of India was deliberately thrown by the rash

*"The background of Assamese Culture", by S. K. Bhuyan.

and tactless act of Vaidya Deva, the over-zealous general of Kumar Pala, the king of Bengal”.

The above-mentioned conditions existed in Assam on the eve of the visit of Guru Nanak in Kamarupa. Mushroom states had grown under various chiefs. The Varahis established their rule in one area with Chughuragarh as their headquarter. The Kalitas had their headquarter at Mayapur. Nagamatta ruled in Darrang district, the Kacharis in Nowgong district. The small chieftains and tribes used to quarrel with each other. Some of the chiefs were Vaishnavas, some Shaivas and others Shaktas. They raised temples at various places in honour of their gods and goddesses. At this period in Assamese history, a noted saint named Sankara Deva (1449-1569) appeared on the scene. He was greatly responsible for bringing peace and unity in the area by starting a religious movement of universal brotherhood through congregational prayer. Recitation of the name of Sree Krishna, songs, dance and music formed part of this congregational prayer. Sankara Deva is said to have shaped the religious, social, cultural and literary life of the Province for ages to come.

Guru Nanak met Sankara Deva at Dhubri, who had come from Barpeta. Both of them discussed the main points of their faith. Sankara Deva's faith is known as Ekasaraṇa Dharma and his sect is called Mahapuruṣa sect. Ekasaraṇa Dharma lays emphasis on the *dasya* aspect of the devotion to God, while Chaitanya's Bhakti is based on *Madhurbhava* (or the love of a married woman). Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji in his lecture* on "The place of Assam in the History and Civilization of India" says about the faith of Sankara Deva : "During his long life,

*"The place of Assam in the History and Civilization of India" (Banikanta Kakati Memorial Lectures, 1954) by Suniti Kumar Chatterji, published by University of Gauhati (G. S. Press, Madras), 1955.

there were six great contemporaries of Sankara Deva in the religious world of India—Chaitanya of Bengal (1485-1533), Vallabhacharya of Andhra and Vrajamandala (1479-1531), Kabir of Banaras (1398-1518), Nanak of the Punjab (1469-1539) and Tulsidasa on the United Provinces (? 1523-1623). Sankara Deva's Eka-Sarana Dharma, or Mahapurusa sect as it is also called (because its leaders beginning with Sankara Deva were great men—Mahapurusas by virtue not of birth but of faith in God) agreed more with the robust and manly path favoured by Kabir and Nanak and later by Tulsidasa : it was the path of a man's straight-forward faith in his master, without his assuming the nature of a woman".

A Gurdwara was built at the place where the Guru rested at Dhubri. This Gurdwara was named Damdama Sahib and the Sikhs of the Guru were known as Damdamians.* The Guru stayed here for a few days. After Dhubri the Guru visited Gauripore. "Rangamati, Jogigopha, Goalpara and then reached Kamakhya where he stayed with the high-priest for some time and left his message with him which is still preserved with him. He then went to Manikarneshwara hills near the present town of Hajo and stayed there at Matsyadhwaja where it is said that Vishnu in Fish incarnation resided. The river Sarvat flows from there and it has Kama lake on the banks of which the Guru built another temple and resided there for some time. The Kund is called Mardana Kund but some say it is Madhna Mund."**

The author of "Guru Tegh Bahadur and Assam Pradesh"

*Guru Tegh Bahadur and Assam Pradesh by Dr. Arjan Singh Mann, Sikh Publishing House, New Delhi—1st Edition, 1969. p. 170.

**Ibid., page 92.

writes further* : He practically visited all the towns of lower and upper Assam and reached Sadiya from where Sri Krishnaji married Rukmani. Then he went to Brahma Kund, where saint Parasram, after taking bath regained his sainthood after fulfilling his vow to kill all the Kshatriyas of the land with his axe. Then he travelled through Tibet, China, Japan, Java, Sumatra, Philippines and Manipore state through Burma. Then he again entered India at Imphal, Bishanpore, Cachar, Sylhet and Lushai Hills. While at Cachar, he paid a visit to a Buddhist Sangharam (monastery at Bhuvan Hill, about 20 miles from the town of Silchar, the Sadar of Cachar district). At that time this monastery was the Principal land-route from India to Upper Burma. When the author saw this place there were many caves hewn out of rocks containing beautiful stone images of Buddha. There was an underground big hall suitable for an assembly of at least one thousand men, but its entrance was a funnel like tunnel.

The Raja or manager of that temple was a Buddhist priest. When he heard that the Guru's sermons were very effective and so persuasive that people were beginning to repudiate Buddhism and adopting his religion, he was all wrath and with a drawn sword in hand, rushed to the place where the Guru was, in order to kill him. On seeing this the Guru uttered a hymn in the vernacular of the Raja. The translation of that hymn is as follows :

“Whomsoever God gives protection, nobody can kill him,
 “Nanak says, one who envies a saint of God, he goes to hell.

“On hearing this the Raja could not strike the blow, and his mind was instantly changed from the evil design. He humbly asked for forgiveness which was granted. He was so changed that he himself became a follower of the Guru. The author

*Pages 92-94.

has seen this place. There was a small place called Nanak Ghar near the place but there was no temple but only an enclosure of trees etc. There was one Mahatma looking after this place."

Two names of Assam appear in *Janamsakhis*, Kavroo Desh (Kamrup) and Asa Desh (Assam). The boundary of Kamrup is mentioned as : Bhutan in the north, the districts of Darrang and Nowgong in the east, Khasi hills in the south and Goalpara in the west. Dhubri is situated in the Goalpara district. From Dhubri, the Guru went to Gauhati on the banks of Brahmaputra. The old name of Gauhati is Pragjyotishapura. There are two important temples in this area, the temple of Kamakhya on the Nilacala hill and the temple of Hayagriva Madhava at Hajo. The temple of Kamakhya lies just near Gauhati and Hajo is at a distance of about fifteen miles from Gauhati. In Assam, Kamakhya temple is the main shrine of Shaktas. It is said that the genitals of Sati (Shakti) fell at this place when Vishnu cut her body into pieces. Guru Nanak is said to have visited both the temples at Gauhati and Hajo. The purpose of the visit of Guru Nanak in this area was to dissuade the people from Shakti practices and put them on the right path, i.e. the devotion towards the all-pervading Brahman. It is said that the queen of the area named Gorjan became a disciple of the Guru. She was the grandmother of Raja Ram Deo who became disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Her great grandson Raja Rattan Deo came to Anandpur to pay his respects to Guru Gobind Singh.

Leaving Gauhati, the Guru is said to have visited the area in Upper Assam and then crossed to Burma and other countries beyond India. When he returned from the foreign lands in 1509, he is said to have visited Imphal in Manipur state, Silchar in Cachar district, Ajmeriganj, Karimganj, Sylhet (at that time in Assam but now in East Pakistan after referendum), Lushai hills,

Agartala in Tripura. It was in Cachar district, as stated above, that the Guru met the Buddhist ruler Devloot who wanted to kill him but ultimately became his disciple. From Tripura, the Guru entered Chittagong district of East Bengal (East Pakistan).

A scholar of tribal India has given the following account of the NEFA people in Upper Assam :

Local tradition regards the country round Sadiya as ancient Vidharbha ...and the archaeological relics at Bhishmaknagar in Lohit as marking the capital of king Bhishmuk, whose daughter Rukmani was carried away on the eve of their marriage by Lord Krishna himself. The ruins of the fort of Bulakpung, on the right bank of the Bhareli river at Kameng, are claimed by the Akas as the original home of their ancestor Bhalukad.... A Kalika king, Ram Chandra, driven from this kingdom in the plains, fled to Dafila foothills and established there his capital of Mayapure, which is probably to be identified with the ruins on the Ita hill, not far from Doinmukh in Subhansiri. In the Lohit Division are the ruins of the copper temple, Tameshwari, which at one time must have attracted many worshippers, and a place of great sanctity in the beautiful lower reaches of the Lohit river, the Brahma Kunda, where Parasuram opened a passage through the hills with a single blow of his axe, which is visited every year by thousands of Hindu pilgrims.

This is the history of Hindu India in NEFA before the coming of Ahoms in the eighth century. These Ahoms could defeat the rulers of Kamarupa in the first half of the thirteenth century.

***As quoted in "India's Northern Frontier and China", by Ramesh Sanghvi published by Contemporary Publishers, Bombay, 1st Edition, 1962.**

After the establishment of Ahom Kingdom the name of Kamarupa was changed gradually to Assam from 'Ahom'.

As mentioned in the earlier pages, Guru Nanak visited Brahma Kund in this area.

A mention has been made of the states and their kings in this area. In *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala* the following names of the rulers appear :

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Kavalnain | 10. Sukh Sagar |
| 2. Madhurbain | 11. Naga Paras Ram |
| 3. Sudhar Sain | 12. Raja Atika Ghatika |
| 4. Sukh Chain | 13. Sudh Sambhalika |
| 5. Asrapaneh | 14. Budh Bibek Balak |
| 6. Sagar Sen | 15. Raja Nain Jot |
| 7. Birmain | 16. Raja Bali Singh |
| 8. Lal Nain | 17. Raja Turtirang |
| 9. Rai Ain | 18. Raja Magan Rai |

It is written in *Janamsakhi* that Raja Sudhar Sain was made the Chief of all the rulers. Most of the names of the rulers do not appear to be real names. They seem to be titles adopted by the rulers. It has already been stated that mushroom states were born under various chiefs. They constantly fought with one another. The Guru brought peace in the area by bringing them under one chief ruler. There were Koches, Bhuyans, Varahis, Kalitas, Kacharis, Ahoms etc. and it was a hard task to bring them under one banner. Guru Nanak and Sankara Deva seem to have done the needful. They brought unity in diversity.

These rulers had built several temples of Hindu gods and goddesses in their respective areas, they had raised new townships whereas their old capitals were destroyed in fighting. A Varahi king Thakumutha who fled from his kingdom because of Ahoms, established a new capital in the eastern part of the Darrang district which was named Brahmapur. This name is still retained in a distorted form as Bolampur. The equivalent Bodo word for Brahmapur was Halalam. The capital was again shifted to north-east and named Vishwa-Karmapur which degenerated into Vishpur and latest change is Bihpur or Bihpuria. A Bodo minister Virochona of the Varahi king of Darrang who was also his son-in-law, due to some disagreement fled and established his kingdom in the present Nowgong district with his capital at Brahmapur, about five miles to the east of Nowgong. This place is still known as Brahmapur. His son Vikramaditya-Pha shifted his capital further north-east and named it Sonapur because he had installed the golden image of goddess Durga in a newly erected temple.

A special mention has been made in the preceding paragraph about the Varahi and Bodo kingdoms because of the two capitals known as Brahmapur and Sonapur. We read in Janamsakhis that Guru Nanak visited Brahmapur and Suvarnapur. Suvarnapur or Sonapor is the same town. Therefore, in all probability, the Guru visited these two capitals.

Since the names of the states of eighteen rulers mentioned above do not appear in Janamsakhis, we are not definite about the state whose ruler was installed as the chief king.

BEYOND ASSAM—SALMALA DVIPA

(Brahmapur, Chandpur and Suvaranpur)

It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that Guru Nanak visited Brahmapur and Suvaranpur. In this connection a mention has been made of Varahi and Bodo kingdoms in Upper Assam. When Guru Nanak left Assam in 1506 he visited Burma and other lands in the East and it took him two to three years to return to Assam and Manipur. This journey of Guru Nanak in the South-east Asia has never been recorded. There are of course, vague allusions. Moreover, the memorials of the Guru in these areas could not be preserved because of the difficulties in travelling and keeping contacts.

In the age of Guptas there had been great cultural expansion. Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee, the author of "A History of Indian Civilization"* writes, "The Age of Guptas witnessed cultural expansion not merely in the heart of Asia with Indian colonies and kingdoms distributed from the frontiers of Gandhara and Kashmir northward to the oases of Central Asia and north-eastward to the Chinese frontier, but also beyond the seas in South-east Asia. The trans-Himalayan outposts included Šailadeśa (Kashgar), Chokhuka (Yarkhand), Kustana, Gaushana or Godana (Khotan), Chadota (Niya), Chalmada (Shan-Shan), Bharuka (Uch-Turfan), Kuchi (Kuchar), Agnideśa (Karasehr) and Turapanni (Turfan). The Sanskrit name of the river Tarim was Sita. As in the North, so in the East the colonies and kingdoms had Sanskrit names: Ceylon Lankā (Sinhala,

*Published, October 1956 in India by Hind Kitabs Limited, Bombay.

Tāmrparṇī or Āmradvīpa), Nāgadvīpa, Ratnadvīpa (divisions of Ceylon); Ahudvīpa (isles of Kara), Burma (Suvarṇa-bhūmi, Maramma, Śrī-Kṣetra), Kākā-dvīpa (Kakkonagara), Gangā-nagare (Perak), Kedah (Kataha dvīpa), Kama-lanka or Karma-ranga (Ligor), Siam (Syāmā, Dvārāvati), Sukhodaya (Sukhothat), Cambodia and Annam (Kambuja and Champa), Sumatra (Suvarṇadvīpa or Sri-vijaya), Java (Yavadvīpa), Madura (Madhura), Borneo (Varnadvīpa), Bali (Balidvīpa) and Punyupāyana (the Philippines)". It is said that the entire Indian colony was known as Brahma (deṣa). Only one country is said to have retained this name i.e. Burma (i. e. Brahma deṣa). The name Brahmapur mentioned in the Janam-sakhis seems to connote Burma, though we have shown in the last chapter that the towns of this name existed in Assam.

Researches, on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia (Further India and Indo-Malay Archipelago) by Colonel G. E. Gerini, M.R.A.S., published in conjunction with the Royal Geographical Society, throw lot of useful information about Burma and other neighbouring countries. Argyra has been identified as Arakan. This word means 'silver'. Another word Barakura or Barakkah is said to have been used for the country. This word is a form of 'balaksa' which means white. Now 'silver' is 'white' which is called 'Chandi' in Indian vernacular and 'moon' or 'chānd' is also white, therefore, 'Chandipur' or '*Chandpur*' might have been used for Upper Burma.

According to Ptolemy, there existed beyond Kirrhadia, the Zamirai, a race of cannibals near Mount Maiandros. Colonel Gerini firmly believes that Ptolemy's Kirrhadia corresponds to the districts of Sylhet, Tipperah and Kachar and Zamirai lived in the valley of Chindwin in Upper Burma.

The region along the coast of Besyngetai and Sarakabic Gulf has been identified as the country from Mon or Talang usually called Ramana. This region is also known as Gulf of Martban or Suvannabhūmi, in Lower Burma. It is said that a head-hunting tribe still lives in a part of the area. The Suvannabhūmi region may be identified with *Suvaranpur*.

Thus it is probable that Brahmapur may be the old Indian name of Burma, Chandpur the name of Upper Burma and Suvaranpur the name of Lower Burma.

In *Janamsakhis* it is also mentioned that Guru Nanak visited Silmaladvipa after Assam. The scholars have located Silmaladvipa (the correct name is Salmaladvipa) in different regions. In Asiatic Researches, it has been identified with central Europe. Shri V. V. Iyer identifies it doubtfully with Sarmatia in his article entitled "The seven dvīpas of the Puranas".* Col. Gerini identifies it with Malaya Peninsula in his researches on "Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia". Shri S. M. Ali in his book "The Geography of the Puranas" identifies Salmaladvipa with the equatorial lands of Africa and East Indies. According to him it included Madagascar—the Zanj of the Arab and Persian geographers, the Harina of the Puranas and the Sankh Dvīpa of some other writers. But since *Janamsakhis* have clearly stated that after Assam, the Guru visited Salmaladvipa, therefore, it must have identification with some country in south-east Asia. We agree with Col. Gerini that it is Malay Peninsula. Ptolemy speaks of it as the Golden Kheronese. It is said that the Guru visited Singapore.

In the Puranas the Malay Peninsula is also called Salmaladvipa. Col. Gerini in his Researches on the "Ptolemy's

*Published in the Quarterly Journal of the Mythical Society (London), Vols. 15, 16 and 17.

Geography of Eastern Asia" writes : "The term Salmali, justified to a certain extent by the abundance of silk cotton tree (Salmali—*Bombax Malabaricum*) in the low jungles of the coast, in more or less, as in the case of the other dvīpas of the Puranas, a conventional epithet. I believe it to be a corruption of Suvarna-mali ; for Siamese MSS, contain a legend of Buddha having left one of his holy footprints on the shining mount of Suvarnamaligiri in the Tenasserim province, which I identify with the Kuta-Salmali peak on whose summit the Ramayana places the abode of Vainateya (Garuda). The name of the Peninsula, Malaya dvīpa, mentioned, besides in several MSS., in the Kalyani inscriptions of Pegu, is evidently connected with the alternative designations Salmali and Suvarna-mali dvīpa; and probably was introduced from the Malaya districts of the extreme south of India and Ceylon, the early dark race of which, descendants of the rude Raksasas, and their successors the Dravidians, have undoubtedly been the pioneer colonizers not only of the Peninsula, but also of the islands on the entire sea-coast of Southern Indo-China".

After visiting Salmalidvīpa, Guru Nanak is said to have visited several islands. In *Janamsakhis* we find a mention of islands, but we are not definite about the names and location of these islands. It is surmised that the lands and islands visited by the Guru were the lands and islands which formed part of the greater India, i. e. Siam, Annam, Cambodia; Java, Sumatra, Bali, Borneo etc. He might have also visited Philippines and Japan. But we do not find any traces of the visit of Guru Nanak in these countries. A good deal of search and research is necessary.

It is said that there was a "Charan Padka" (the impression of the holy feet of the Guru) in Vat Sarakate (temple) in Bangkok (Siam-Thailand). He is understood to have washed his hair at

this place. He was held in profound veneration like Lord Buddha, therefore, the annual function at the temple is held on Kartik Purnima. Another temple in Bangkok known as Treyi Mitter (temple of three friends) is supposed to have been built in memory of the Guru and his two companions, Bala and Mardana. It is also probable that the Guru visited Ayudhya also in Thailand, though the Ayudhya chronicles did not mention Guru Nanak's visit to Thailand. A further investigation into this matter is required.

Sea-trade had been going on in the above-mentioned lands and islands. Merchant-ships moved freely in the area. Guru Nanak travelled in merchant ships for major centres in the islands. If ever the Guru touched China and Japan by this sea journey, we can assume that the Guru went to Peking and Nanking at this time. He was received respectfully by the king of China and the king and the people of China were so much impressed by the Guru that the city of Nanking was named in his honour.*

*It is said that when Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India was presented a welcome address in Peking in 1951-52, this fact was specifically mentioned.

ORISSA

It was in early months of 1509 that Guru Nanak left Bengal and entered Orissa. He passed through Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts of Orissa and crossed Vaitarnī, Brahmanī and Mahānadi rivers. Vaitarnī is one of the sacred rivers. It rises in the hills in the southern part of the Singhbhum district of Bihar and enters Orissa. Brahmanī is another sacred river which flows from north-west to the south-east through the Balasore district of Orissa. Mahānadi is the largest river of Orissa. It rises from the hills in Madhya Pradesh and passes through Bastar and in Orissa it flows past Sambalpur and Cuttack.

The Guru wanted to visit Jagannatha Puri, a great religious centre of the Hindus. It is likely that besides his companions, he was accompanied by Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the great Vaishnava saint of Bengal. The Guru rested on the banks of Mahānadi river at Cuttack and visited the ancient temple of Dhavleshwar Mahadeva. There stands a Gurdwara now at his resting place which is known as Gurdwara Guru Nanak Datan Sahib or Gurudwar Kaliaboda. It is said that after brushing his teeth, he planted the little twig of the Sahra tree at the site which grew into a big tree. This old tree fell down some time ago and a piece of its trunk is preserved in the Gurdwara. From the roots of the old tree another tree has grown up. When the author visited this tree in June 1969 he noticed a small inscription on the platform around the tree which bears the Mūl Mantra and the name of Guru Nanak and the word Waheguru. Just near this inscription lie a small size Sivalingam and a small size statue of Nandi bull of Shiva, which shows that the Shaivites of

Cuttack at one time considered this place as their own.

The Mahant of Dhavleshwar Mahadeva temple was highly impressed by the sweet words of the Guru and is said to have become his disciple. The ruler of the state also came to see the Guru and donated the piece of land which is now partly in the possession of the management of the Gurdwara and partly in the possession of the Udāsis. It is said that an Udāsi from the Punjab who settled here used to advise the people to remember "Wahiguru", the name of the Lord, therefore, the Gurdwara also became known as "Wahiguru Math".

At the time of the visit of Guru Nanak, Orissa was ruled by Pratap Rudra Deva (1504-1532), the son of Purushottama Deva (1479-1504). It is said that in his earlier years he showed a leaning towards Buddhism but the Brahman priests were ultimately successful in converting him to their faith. Shri R. D. Banerji, the author of "History of Orissa from the earliest times to the British Period" mentions that "under the reign of Pratap Rudra Deva that great stirring of the popular heart took place which ended in the Vishnuvite reformation. For twelve years the holy Chaitanya preached the new creed, silenced the sluggish Śivaite priesthood and strove with spiritual weapons against the king himself, till the monarch forgot the pomp of his throne in the humility of a disciple." According to Gyani Gian Singh the Banias of Teli caste, are the disciples of the Guru in Cuttack and the surrounding areas.

From Cuttack the Guru went to Bhubaneshwar, the city of temples and from thence went to Sakhi Gopal. According to the usual practice the pilgrims first go to Puri and then they go to Sakhi Gopal when the Gopal becomes a witness of their visit to Jagannath Puri. But the Guru first went to Sakhi Gopal and then proceeded to Puri.

At Puri, the Guru stayed just opposite the temple of Lord Jagannatha. There is a Gurdwara at the site of his stay which is known as "Mangū Math" and is in the possession of Udasis. In the evening, when the darkness spread all around, the Pandits began to perform *Aarti* (circumambulation) of the Lord with the lighted earthen lamps in a salver and with the offering of incense and flowers. The Guru went inside the temple but did not join the *Aarti*; he simply amused himself by looking at the show. The Pandits were angry, but the Guru answered that his *Aarti* was quite different. On the insistence of the Pandits, the Guru sang his famous *Aarti*. It begins like this :

In the salver of the sky, the sun and the moon are like the earthen lamps

The constellation of stars is like precious stones

The whole forest of *chandan* is the incense

The wind moves like a *chaurī*

And all the flowers of the forest are given as offering

What type of *aarti*, this shall be,

O Lord, dispelling fear

The musical organs of celestial undying music resound.....

The Guru did not like the circumambulation round a statue; he wanted the Pandits to sing the true *aarti* of Lord Jagannatha, the Lord of the world and the creator of the universe. The chief priest of the temple Shri Krishan Lal is said to have been highly impressed and showed great reverence for the Guru.

Next morning the Guru went on the sea-side for a stroll. There were many people taking bath. Mardana felt thirsty. The

water all around was insipid. The Guru with his staff dug up the sand near him and there appeared a spring of cool drinking water, from which Mardana drank to his satisfaction. When the people saw this, they gathered around the Guru and most of them became his disciples. A Pandit whose name was Kalyuga also became the disciple of the Guru. He built a *Baoli* around the spring. There is a Gurdwara by the side of this *Baoli* which is known as "Gurudwara Baoli Math". It is in the possession of Udasis at present.

Puri is one of the four most sacred centres of Hindu pilgrimage, the other three are Badrinath, Rameshwaram and Dwarka. The Rath-Yatra or the car festival is the biggest event of the year. It is held in the month of June-July.

It has now been brought to light that the historic meeting between Guru Nanak and Shri Chaitanya took place at Jagannath Puri. Dr. Trilochan Singh has quoted* from Ishwar Das' *Chaitanya Bhagavat* the oldest manuscript, which exists in two volumes and is preserved in Prachi Samiti (Oriental Society) Cuttack. According to him the following two cross references from the work clearly show that there was a meeting between the two great saints at Puri :

1. Srinivāsa je bisāmbhar
Kīrtan madhya bihār
Nanak sarang eh dōī
Rup Sanātan do bhāi
Jagāi Madhāi ektar
Kīrtan karanti enritya (adhyaya 61)
- [Sri Chaitanya, the divine Lord, joined in Kīrtan (congrega-

*"New Historical Discoveries—Historic meeting between Guru Nanak and Sri Chaitanya at Jagannath Puri and Guru Nanak's visit to Ceylon" by Dr. Trilochan Singh in *Sikh Review*, Calcutta, Sept., 1963, pp. 28-33.

tional prayer) with Nanak, who was accompanied by his disciple Sarang (the musician i.e. Mardana). With them were Rūp and Sanatan, the two brothers and Jagāi and Madhai. They all performed *Kīrtan* and Divine dance.]

2. Nāgar pursotam dās
Jāngli Nandñi tā pās
Nanak sabet gehan
Gopal gurū sang tem
Sangat mat balrām
Bihār nilgri dhām.

(adhyaya 64)

[In the congregational singing (led by Sri Chaitanya and Guru Nanak), Nagar Purshotam was also there. Two women disciples Jangli and Nandni also joined them. With them was also Gopal Guru for whom Guru Nanak developed deep personal affection. With them was also Nityananda Prabhu, supposed to be avatara of Balrama. They all performed *Kīrtan* at Jagannath Puri.]

According to Dr. Trilochan Singh, there is another reference in chapter 47 of the manuscript in which it is stated that Udyata, the disciple of Sri Chaitanya was particularly instructed by his Master to look after the personal comforts of Guru Nanak.

It is also probable that the Guru met Vallabhacharya also at Jagannath Puri. Vallabhacharya was a contemporary of Guru Nanak and an expounder of *Shuddhadvaita* school of Vedanta.

From Jagannath Puri the Guru travelled for some time on the banks of Chilka lake and then visited Ranapur, Khurda etc. Then he went along the river Mahanadi towards Madhya Pradesh. It is said that he crossed the river near Sārangarh,

MADHYA PRADESH

Madhya Pradesh was visited by Guru Nanak twice, once during his first journey when he was returning home after about ten years, for the second time during his second journey when he visited the southern States of India. During his first journey, he entered Madhya Pradesh from Orissa, while travelling on the banks of Mahānadi. He reached Sārangaṛh in Madhya Pradesh and then crossed the river.

Then the Guru proceeded further and reached Amarkantak, a mountain, which is a part of the Mekhala range in Gondwana. Two rivers, i.e. Narmada and Son take their rise from this range. Mount Katak is considered a branch of the Vindhyaṇchal range. The people of this area worshipped lightening considering it All-Powerful, but the Guru forbade them from such a practice laying emphasis on the remembrance of the Name of Brahman, whose power works in all deities and forces. The king of the place Raja Mainpal was highly impressed by the instructions of the Guru and became his disciple. Here the Guru met several saints and divines and then he passed through Vindhyaṇchal. A Kirata Bhil, Kāṇḍa by name, who was a cannibal, caught hold of Mardana and threw him into a boiling vessel in order to cook him for the meal. It is said that the Guru reached the place in time to save his companion. The piercing look of the Guru, on one side made the vessel quite cool and on the other hand brought a big change in the mind of the tyrant. He realized his sins and fell down at the feet of the Guru. From this time he was

a changed man and later became a great preacher of the doctrines of the Guru in these parts.

The Guru passed through the dense forests of Vindhyachal range where Mardana at times was terror-stricken because of savage people and savage animals, but at other times enjoyed the various kinds of fruit. In moments of cheerfulness, he would sing hymns of the Guru and attract the forest-dwellers, who benefitted greatly in the company of the Guru.

The Guru followed the course of Narmada river and reached Jabalpur. Here he met a Jangam Sadhu named Phul and forbade him from performing miracles because they created ego. The Guru held discussions with him and put him on the right path. Then he visited Chitrakut hill near Manikpur where many saints and divines stay at all times. Rama and Lakshmana came at the foot of this hill and it is said that in their time the forest in the surrounding area was very thick and it was very difficult to find out the human habitation. The Guru toured through this area of the old Malava country.

From Chitrakut, the Guru paid a visit to Maihar or Maihar Nagar, which was a great centre of Lingayats or Jangams; then he visited the Tekri of Dattatreya from where he went to Faridwara. The well in which Sheikh Farid enchained and hung himself with his face downwards for a number of years in order to realise God through such asceticism, is still preserved. Just near this well, there is the grave of the shepherd who followed the example of Baba Farid and realised God.

Then the Guru passed through Panna territory in Bundelkhand, hilly tracts of Saugar, Jhansi district of Uttar Pradesh, Chanderi, Jhalrapatan (in Rajasthan), Gwalior, Karauli (in Rajasthan), Dholpur (in Rajasthan), Bharatpur (in Rajasthan) and entered Punjab again via Rewari and Gurgaon. There is a

Gurdwara at Chanderi in memory of the visit of the Guru.

Second Journey : During his second journey, the Guru entered Madhya Pradesh from Rajasthan. From Banswara (in Rajasthan) he reached Jaora in Madhya Pradesh. Then passing through Mehidpur, he visited Ujjain, which was known as Avantika in the classical age. It is one of the seven sacred cities of the Hindus and is considered as a centre of Hindu culture. The famous temple of Mahākāl is situated in this city, where one of the twelve Jyotirlingams of Shankara is worshipped. It is believed that the worship of Shiva spread from this city. Lord Shiva killed the great demon Andhak at this place with his trident. There are many other temples of different gods. The Guru visited this city in order to hold discussions with the chief priests, Vairagis etc. in the city and advise them not to worship the idols.

From Ujjain the Guru went to Indore, where there is a Gurdwara in memory of his visit. From Indore, the Guru reached Bhopal, which is now the capital of Madhya Pradesh. It is said that Raja Bhoj was the founder of Bhopal. He is said to have built a huge lake in the city. Because of this lake the city is known as Tal Bhopal. After visiting this lake-city, the Guru went to Hoshangabad, on the banks of Narmada river, where there stand a good number of temples including those of Jagannatha, Ram Chandar, Hanuman, Mahadev and Śanī. After meeting the keepers of these temples and preaching his Gospel, the Guru visited the area surrounding Hoshangabad. He is said to have gone to visit Surya Kundi and Oankāreshwar. In an island near the left bank of Narmada known as Mandhata, in the Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh, there are Oankāreshwar Jyotirlingam and Amleshwar Jyotirlingam.

At Hoshangabad, the Guru stayed in a garden, where the

ruler and the people of the area benefitted from his company. A memorial in honour of his visit stands in the garden.

From Hoshangabad, the Guru went to Sohagpur. On a hill near Sohagpur his melodious songs attracted the attention of the inhabitants of the place. They used to worship *Sanī*—a god who rides on a vulture and is generally considered “malefic among malefics”. His influence is very much dreaded. All the troubles and calamities are traced to him. The people worshipped him so that he may not look at them with evil eye. The Guru advised them not to have faith in mythology and asked them to remember Him (Brahman) who is the creator of good and evil both.

Continuing his journey from Sohagpur the Guru passed through Panchmarhi, Narsinghpur, Chhindwara, Seoni, Balaghat, Tumsar etc. and reached Ramtek, about 24 miles north of Nagpur. There is a Ramgiri hill near Ramtek. On its peak, there is Shri Rama temple, with images of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. It is said that while going to Panchvati Lord Rama stayed here. The Guru is said to have remained here for four months. The famous acharya Jogan Prakash in this area belonged to Ganapatya sect; he was highly impressed by the personality of the Guru and became his disciple along with his followers. At Ramtek there is a memorial commemorating the visit of the Guru.

II

THE SECOND JOURNEY

RAJASTHAN

Though Guru Nanak touched the territory of Rajasthan during his first journey in 1509 A.D., he visited most of the places in Rajasthan, in his second journey in 1510 A.D. During his first journey, while returning to Punjab and passing through Madhya Pradesh, he came to Chanderi, from whence he took a western course and reached Jhalrapatan in Rajasthan. It is a place of great architectural interest and is situated about fifty miles from Kotah. The temples of Sitalēśwar Mahādeva and Sat Saheli are impressive structures in the area. The people of the area considered wind as the chief god and identified *Prāṇas* with the soul. The Guru sang his shloka of *Āsā di Var* beginning with "Bhai vic paṇ vohai sad vao", laying emphasis on the fear of the Lord. He said that the wind-god moved in the fear of the Lord. He also told the people that the soul is immortal while *Prāṇas* are not.

From Jhalrapatan, the Guru went to Baran and from thence visited Kapiladhārā, where Kapila is said to have performed great austerities. Then he moved upwards towards the Punjab and passed through Karauli, Dholpur and Bharatpur in Rajasthan.

During his second journey the Guru left Sirsa in the Punjab and the first important place that he visited in Rajasthan was Bikaner, from whence he went to Jaisalmer and Jodhpur. It is said that the Guru held discussions with Jaina monks in their temples at this place and sang his famous hymn about Jaina practices, which occurs in *Mājh ki Vār*. At Jaisalmer and

Jodhpur he met the saints and divines living at those places. Jaisalmer is "Thar" or the Indian Desert. In the time of Guru Nanak it was the capital of Bhatti Rajputs. It was built by Rawal Jaisal in 1156. The Fort contains large number of Vaishnava and Jaina temples. Jodhpur city was founded in 1458 by Rao Jodha, the chief of Rathor Rajputs. It is famous for its fort. When the Guru came to this city and sat down on the bank of the tank, he addressed a hymn to the yogis and vairagis assembled there. A memorial was erected in the honour of his visit.

Leaving Jodhpur the Guru visited Mārwar, and from thence went to Ajmer, a city of historical importance and of religious and architectural interest. It is said that this city was founded by Ajaipal Chauhan in the seventh century. From 1470 to 1531, the period during which Guru Nanak paid a visit to this city, it was under the Muslim rulers of Malwa. One of the best specimens of Hindu architecture belongs to this city and that is "Adhai Din ka Jhonpra". It was originally built for a college. The adjoining temple was built by Visaldeva Vighraja II in 1153, which was turned into a mosque by Mohammad Ghori during his conquest in 1192. There is also one of the most sacred Shrines of Muslims in this city and that is Dargah Khawaja Sahib in which there is mausoleum of Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti. The Khwaja who was born near Ghor in Afghanistan came and settled in Ajmer in about A. D. 1190. He died in 1236 at the age of 97. The tomb was built in 1464. The urs of the Khwaja are celebrated every year at the Dargah.

When Guru Nanak reached Ajmer, he visited both the above-mentioned places and discussed the religious doctrines with the priests of the Dargah. Though there is no historical Gurdwara in Ajmer, there is a Singh Sabha and also a recently built Gurdwara named Sri Guru Nanak Sabha Gurdwara in Ajmer Ganj.

From Ajmer, the Guru went to Pushkar. It is at a distance of about seven miles from Ajmer and is one of the most sacred Hindu places of pilgrimage. It is said that Brahma wanted to perform a yagna. A lotus flower in his hand fell at this place, therefore, he selected this place for the performance of yagna and named it after the lotus, i.e., 'Pushkar'. There are many temples at this place ; the most prominent among them is the temple of Brahma. There is a Gurdwara at the site where the Guru stayed and held discussions with the pandits and yogis. The Guru is said to have sat at five places in the area including the above-mentioned site. The other four places are Guru Ghat, Santpura, Panch Kund, and Bamdev cave. The name of Guru Ghat has been changing from Guru Ghat to Gau Ghat, Gau Ghat to Gauri Ghat, Gauri Ghat to Gobind Ghat (Guru Gobind Singh also visited this place) and from Gobind Ghat to Gandhi Ghat.

The Guru returned to Ajmer from Pushkar and proceeded towards Udaipur and passed through Nasirabad, Deogarh and Nāthdwārā. At Nathdwara there are several temples, the prominent being that of Shri Nath ji. It is the most sacred place of Vallabh-Sampardaya. Udaipur is one of the most beautiful cities of India with its lakes, places, gardens and temples. The important temple of Udaipur is of Shri Jagannatha. Just near this temple, there are three temples of Vallabha-Sampardaya whose influence spread after the visit of Guru Nanak. After visiting Udaipur, the Guru went westward to Mount Abu, which is one of the prettiest hill-stations in India. It is situated in a charming valley, eight miles long and three miles wide. This hill-station is a place of pilgrimage for Jainas. There are five Dilwara temples here, out of which Vimal Vasahi and Tejpal are famous. Vimal Vasahi, the first Jaina temple, was built in 1031 A.D. and is dedicated to Adi Nath, the first Tirthankara.

The second Jain temple was built in 1231 A.D., and is dedicated to Nemi Nath, the twenty-second Tirthankara. In the close vicinity of Dilwara temple is the beautiful Nakki lake. All around the lake, there are temples and cave-dwellings of the ascetics. At Achalgarh, at about five miles from Dilwara, there is a Shiva temple and another temple Gaumukh is situated at a distance of about six miles from Abu. The highest peak in Mount Abu is Guru Shikhar, which lies at some distance beyond Achalgarh.

The Guru held discussions with the Jaina monks at Mount Abu and advised them regarding the right type of discipline. From Mount Abu, the Guru is said to have crossed the boundary of Rajasthan into Gujarat and visited Patna, Idar and Ahmadnagar. Then he again crossed into Rajasthan territory and passed through Dungarpur and Banswara. From Banswara he proceeded towards Madhya Pradesh.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh comprises parts of Hyderabad state and the Telugu-speaking areas of Madras province of British India. The old name of the country is Telengana or Tailanga Desha. According to Dr. D. C. Sircar, author of "Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India", an Inscription of 1358 A. D. gives the following boundaries of the Tailinga or Tailanga country, that is, the Telugu country is bounded by Maharashtra in the west, Kalinga in the east, Pandya in the south and Kanyākubja in the north". At present, it includes Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Medak, Warangal, Khammam, Hyderabad, Mahbub Nagar and Nalgonda districts of Hyderabad and Srikakulam, Vishakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Anantapur, Cuddapah and Chittoor districts of Madras. Two major rivers of the state are Godavari and Krishna.

Guru Nanak entered Andhra Pradesh from central Maharashtra. From Nander in Maharashtra the Guru went eastward and reached Nirmal in Adilabad district from whence he went to Medak, passing through Nizamabad district. From Medak, he travelled to Bidar in Karnatak state. He again entered Andhra Pradesh and reached Golconda, which was then the capital of Kutb Shahi Kingdom (1507-1687). Hyderabad was not in existence at that time. It was founded by Muhammad Kuli, the fifth Kutb Shahi King of Golconda in 1589 on the bank of Musi river.

From Golconda, he passed through Nalgonda district and

reached Bezwada (now Vijayawada) on the bank of Krishna river. It remained great religious centre in the Buddhist period. There are some old shrines dating back to 7th century. The Guru travelled for some time in the seaside districts towards the north and went up to Srikakulam. A Sikh temple still exists in Salur in Srikakulam district. After returning to Vijayawada, the Guru visited Panna Narsingh temple in Mangalgiri which is situated on a small hill. It is said that Lord Vishnu sanctified this place with his presence, when he killed Hiranayakashyap, a demon king in order to protect Prehlad. From Mangalgiri the Guru went to Ram Nam Kshetram in Guntur, which is at a distance of thirteen miles from it. It is probable that the Guru visited the two ancient centres of Andhra's culture in this area, i.e., Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.

From Guntur district, the Guru entered Mahbubnagar district where he is said to have visited Pangal. He is said to have met the yogis at this place. The name of the place has been recorded as Pangalpur. The memorial commemorating the visit of the Guru is known as Tilganji Sahib. It is situated on a hill. The Guru is said to have been asked by the Yogis to distribute a sesame seed to the people gathered there. The Guru asked his companion Bhai Bala to put the seed in a mortar and grind the same with pestle mixing water in it. The water was then given to the people to drink and the yogis were very much pleased. It is said that the mortar and pestle used at that time are still preserved at the place.

Then passing through Raichur in Karnatak, the Guru visited Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh, which is situated at the junction of the Hindri and the Tungabhadra. Here the Guru visited the shrine of Srisailem and Mallikarjuna temple. From Kurnool and Alur, the Guru again entered Karnatak and visited Bellary

and Hampi. From Bellary district the Guru entered Andhra Pradesh and visited Anantapur. It is said that Ananta incarnation of Sheshnaga appeared at this place. From Anantapur the Guru reached Cuddapah, where there is a Dharamsala in the memory of the Guru. From Cuddapah, the Guru entered Chittoor district. Three important temple towns of Andhra lie in this district, i.e., Tirupati, Tiruttani and Kalahasti. Tirupati is said to be the abode of the "Lord of the seven Hills". The Tirumalai Hill temple here is situated in picturesque surroundings and is called Bala ji temple. Bala ji is another name of Lord Venkateshwar. At Tiruttani, there is a temple of Swami Kartik. At Kalahasti, there is an important temple of Lord Shiva.

From Chittoor district, the Guru entered Tamil Nadu State.

KARNATAK

During his second journey, the Guru touched Karnatak twice; for the first time, while going to Ceylon and for the second time while returning home. On his outward journey, the Guru entered Karnatak through its northern-most tip. From Medak in Andhra Pradesh, he came to Bidar. This town was founded by Ahmad Shah Wali Bahmani in 1430 A.D. When the Bahmani kingdom declined in the sixteenth century, the Barid Shahis came into power and later on this town was annexed in the Adil Shahi Kingdom of Bijapur. It contains many ruins of palaces and mosques. The most prominent ruined monument of Bidar is the Madrasah or College which was founded by a Bahmani Minister in 1472.

At Bidar, the Guru stayed outside the town and attracted the notice of the two Muslim divines Pir Jalal-ud-Din and Pir Yaqub Ali, when he sang one of his hymns to the accompaniment of rebeck played upon by Bhai Mardana. A great discussion ensued and the Sadhus and Pirs who had gathered there bowed before the Guru. The people of the area who had heard about the greatness of the Guru came to him with the request to bless them with sweet drinking water, as the water in that area was quite insipid. It is said that the Guru touched the nearby mound with his wooden sandal and the cool drinking water gushed forth from the dry hilly area. At present a Gurdwara named Gurdwara Nanak Jhira stands on the site.

From Bidar the Guru went to Golconda in Andhra Pradesh. He again entered Karnatak territory after visiting Vijayawada, Guntur and Mehboobnagar. He entered Raichur district

from whence he went to Bellary district, where he visited Hampi. It was the capital of Vijayanagar kingdom and has several ancient temples, which were visited by the Guru. In this area the Guru went to Anagundi village or old Kishkindha. There are several temples and historical places on the bank of Tungabhabra, e.g. the court of Bali, Lakshmi Narsingh temple and Chintamani cave temple. Lord Rama is said to have killed Bali here. There is a cave in which Lord Rama rested after killing Bali. Just behind the cave, there is Hanuman hill. From Bellary district in Karnatak, the Guru went to Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. After visiting Anantapur, Cuddapah and Chittoor districts in Andhra Pradesh, the Guru is said to have paid a visit to Bangalore, Mandya and Mysore districts. In Mandya district he is said to have travelled to Maddur and Seringapatam. From Maddur the Guru visited Ramgiri hill, at a distance of about twelve miles where there is Kodandramaswami temple in which there are images of Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. It is said that Sugriva resided on this hill. Seringapatam is the old Srirangapattana. There is an ancient fort long before the days of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in Seringapatam in which there are ruins of the Hindu temple of Sri Ranganatha. Seringapatam is situated on the bank of Kaveri and within the river, there are three islands containing the three temples of Sri Ranganatha. In Bangalore, there is a Math of Adi Shankaracharya, an ancient Shiva temple and several other temples. In Mysore, there is a Math of Sringeri Shankaracharya and a temple of Chamunda Devi. It is said that Mysore was the capital of Mahishasura and the goddess killed him at this place. There is a huge image of Mahishasura on Chamunda hill near the temple of Chamunda goddess.

From Mysore district, the Guru entered the territory of Tamil Nadu.

On his return journey after travelling through Malabar or Kerala country, the Guru entered Karnatak again near the sea-coast. He travelled through Coorg district and passed through its capital town Marcara. Then he visited Mangalore, a sea-port in South Kanara district. The important temple in this city is that of Mangala Devi from whose name the city was named Mangalpur and then Mangalore. From Mangalore the Guru travelled to Śṛṅgeri in Chikmagalur district. Here he held discussions with the Shankaracharya of the Math. There are four Maṭhs of Shankaracharya, three others being at Dwarka, Jagannath Puri and Badri Narayan. The Śṛṅgeri Math is considered the chief Math. After leaving Śṛṅgeri the Guru crossed the coastal districts of South Kanara and North Kanara and then entered the Portuguese territory of Goa from whence he proceeded to Maharashtra.

TAMIL NADU

The Guru entered Tamil Nadu from Karnatak state. He crossed the boundary of Karnatak from Bangalore district and travelled for some time on the bank of Palar River and went to Madras. At Madras, he visited the Church on the Great Mount or St. Thomas Mount. There is a legend that St. Thomas was martyred on this hill while he was kneeling on a stone. He was mortally wounded by a Brahmin with a lance at the Little Mount and then killed on the Great Mount. On St. Thomas Mount the Guru held discussions with the Christian priests. The Roman Catholic Cathedral at San Thome was built in 1504 and the remains of St. Thomas are buried here. St. Thomas the apostle is said to have come to India in the beginning of the fourth century. It is said that he converted Parthians, Medes, Persians and Indians and died as a martyr in Calamine in India. According to Nestorians or Thomas Christians he died as a martyr in Mailapur (Mylapore), a few miles south-west of Madras. At Mylapore there is the Kapaleshwer temple which is a Shaiva Temple. There are several other temples in Madras. After visiting the cathedral and the temples, the Guru visited Chingleput, from whence he went to Conjeeveram. At a distance of about nine miles from Chingleput, there is Pakshi Tiratha, which was visited by the Guru. Vedgiri hill is considered as a place of pilgrimage.

Conjeeveram or Kanchi is one of the most sacred seven abodes of the Hindus. It is divided into two parts, i.e. Shiva Kanchi and Vishnu Kanchi. Ekamreshwar temple is the chief temple of Shiva Kanchi. It is said that the bone-skeleton

of Sati fell at Shiva Kanchi. The chief temple of Vishnu Kanchi is that of Shri Devraj Swami. Lord Vishnu is called Devraj, or Varadraj. A Sikh temple still exists at Shiva Kanchi.

Then the Guru visited Vellore where the Chief Shaiva temple is called Jallandhareshwar temple. After Vellore, the Guru toured through North and South Arcot. He travelled through the territory of Pondicherry where there are several ancient temples, the most ancient one being Ganesha temple.

From Pondicherry, the Guru travelled to Trichinopoly and Srirangam. Trichinopoly is famous for its Ganesha temple from which the pilgrim crosses Cauvery river and reaches Srirangam on the opposite side. Within the two branches of Cauvery Srirangam looks like an island. In Srirangam temple lies the huge black coloured four-armed image of Lord Ranganatha with an image of Lakshmi by its side. There are several other images there. At a distance of about one mile from Srirangam, there is a temple named Jambukeshwar temple, which is a Shaiva temple.

After visiting Trichinopoly—Srirangam area, the Guru is said to have visited Tanjore, which is situated near the head of the delta of the Cauvery river. In 1510, when Guru Nanak visited it, it was annexed by Krishna Raya of Vijayanagar. This city is famous for the Great Pagoda of Brihadishwara, which is a Shaiva Shrine. This temple was founded by the Chola king, Rajaraya the Great (985-1014). At Tanjore, several people became the disciples of the Guru after listening to his sweet music and discourses. A Sikh temple still exists in the memory of the visit of Guru Nanak here.

From Tanjore, the Guru visited Kumbakonam and Negapatam. At Kumbakonam, a Kumbh fair is held after twelve years. There are many temples here, but the prominent are five, i.e., Kumbheshwar, Sharangpani, Nageshwar, Ramaswami

and Chakrapani. The chief place of pilgrimage is Mahamagham Sarovar. At Negapatam, which is a sea-port, there is one temple each of Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma and Nilayatakshi Devi.

From Negapatam, the Guru travelled along the sea-coast and reached Ramnad. It is learnt that there is a temple at Ramnad commemorating Guru Nanak's visit to South India with a property worth two lakhs attached to it.* From Ramnad, the Guru journeyed to Darbh Shain and Devi Patan and then Rameshwaram from whence he boarded a ship for Ceylon. At Darbh Shain Lord Rama rested for three days and requested the sea to make way for his forces up to Ceylon. At Devi Patan, the goddess Durga is said to have killed a demon. At Rameshwaram, he visited the profoundly respected Shiva temple, said to have been founded by Lord Rama. It is associated with his journey to Ceylon in search of Sita. The temple is considered one of the twelve jyotirlingmas. Rameshwaram is an island and its last tip towards Ceylon is Dhanushkodi, which is considered most sacred spot for taking a bath. A Sikh temple commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak still exists at Rameshwaram.

When the Guru returned from Ceylon, he took a ship from Jaffna and disembarked at the site of Tuticorin port where the ships used to stay. The Portuguese settlement at Tuticorin is said to have been founded in about 1540. From Tuticorin, the Guru visited Palamcottah and impressed the people with his doctrines. It is said that he met the yogis here. Some chroniclers say that the incident of Pangalpur and Tilganji actually occurred here. There is a Sikh temple here which commemorates the visit of the Guru to this place. From Palamcottah, the Guru travelled further south and reached the southernmost

*See *New Historic Discourses* by Dr. Tirlochan Singh in *Sikh Review* of September, 1963.

point of the Indian peninsula at cape Comorin. This place is named after the temple of the Virgin or Kumari which is an attribute of Durga. The temple and the town stand on the rocks.

From cape Comorin, the Guru journeyed towards Kerala state.

CEYLON

From Dhanushkodi, at the tip of the island of Rameshwaram the Guru embarked on a boat for the coast of Ceylon. The point where the Guru landed is unknown. It is, however, recorded in the old *Janamsakhi* that the Guru asked his followers to repeat *Mūl Mantra* and walk on the water behind him. In this way the sea was crossed. The distance between point Calimere in southern India and point Pedro in the north of Ceylon is only 36 miles. Between Rameshwaram and Ceylon there is Adam's Bridge and a succession of rocks reaching nearly across of gulf of Manaar at the narrowest point between Ceylon and the opposite coast.

The Sikh chronicles mention the names of Saido and Seeho and Bhai Bala and Mardana who accompanied the Guru during his journey to Ceylon. The first two prepared an authentic record of the utterances and compositions of the Guru in a collection named *Pran Sangli*.¹ There is a reference to one hundred and thirteen chapters of *Pran Sangli* in the *Janamsakhi* of Bhai Bala. This work was brought to the Punjab by Bhai Paīrā at the instance of the fifth Sikh Guru, when he was compiling the *Adi Granth*. Bhai Paīrā gave a description of the route followed by him which has been recorded in the recension of the *Adi Granth* in the name of Bhai Banno. It is known as *Haqiqat Rah Mukam* or the itinerary and the route.

1. The *Pran Sangli* edited by Sant Sampuran Singh in Devanagari characters contains 80 chapters only; the editor feels that either the other chapters have not been brought or they have been lost. He has put down the dates of the visit of the Guru to Ceylon from 1570 to 1574 Bikrami (1513 to 1517 A.D.).

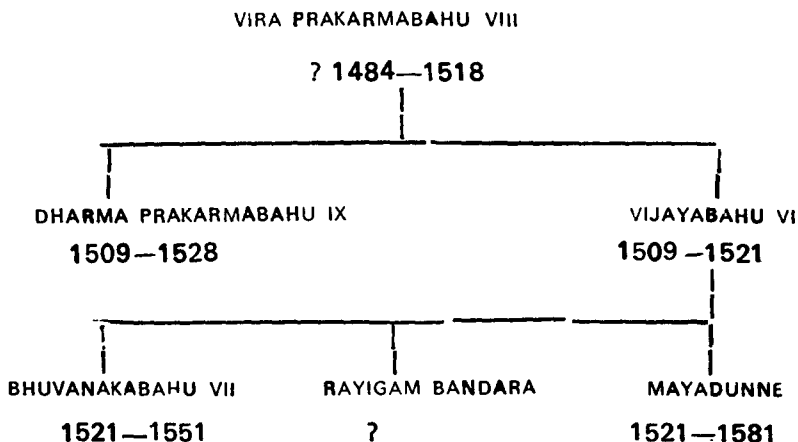
The relevant recording is as follows : "Negapatam, Bidar and Tanjore city—their king is Iyerapat Nayak. There is the dominion of the king Rama. Therefrom the people embark on the ships. It takes three days and three nights to Japapatan (Jaffnapatam) a port on the other side. There they disembark. That is Singhladip (Ceylon). It contains 1400 villages. There were seven kings there and with the blessings of the Guru there is a United Kingdom. The descendants of the king Shivnabh live at Satavad (Setawak). The present king is Mayadunne who is the son of Rai Singh and grandson of Raja Shivnabh. There is a *Dharamsala* of the Guru there.....".

The above description made by a Sikh who had actually visited Ceylon is an ample proof of the visit of Guru Nanak to Ceylon. As recorded in the above statement the descendants of Raja Shivnabh lived at Sitawak and the grandson of Raja Shivnabh i.e., Mayadunne was the king at that time. According to *Culavamsa*, Mayadunne—the illustrious ruler of men—was the youngest brother of Bhuvankabahu VII (1521-1551). At the division of the kingdom in 1521 A.D. Mayadunne received the region between the coastland and the mountain with Sitawak as capital. The present name of Sitawak is Avisawella and it is situated at 26 miles from Colombo. Mayadunne is said to have maintained himself successfully till 1581. This shows that Bhai Pairā went to Ceylon in or before 1581.¹

As recorded in *Culavamsa* Parakkamabahu VIII ruled over Ceylon from about 1484 to 1518. This was the period when Guru Nanak visited Ceylon. Vira Parakkamabahu VIII had two sons : Vijayabahu VI and Dharma Prakarmabahu IX. Both Seem

1. *Culavamsa*—Part II, translated by Will.

to have been made co-regents by their father in the year 1509. But Prakarmabahu IX, though he lived till 1528, was of no great influence. We do not find any mention of his rule in *Culavamsa*.¹ This list of the kings given in the Sinhalese chronicles in the times under review is as follows :



This table shows that Mayadunne was the grandson of Vira Prakarmabahu VIII, whom the Sikh chronicles describe as Raja Shivrabh. Raja Shivrabh seems to be the corrupted form of Raja Sinha [Si (Shiv)+nha (nabh)]. This title was adopted by the son of Mayadunne who crowned himself the emperor of Ceylon as recorded in "A True and exact description of the Great Island of Ceylon" by the Portuguese chronicler Phillipus Baldaeus. According to him Ceylon was divided into several kingdoms and principalities, as is to be seen by the title which the emperor bears, styling himself "*Raja Singa*, Emperor of

1. The Ceylon Historical Journal Vol. VIII, July 1958 to April 1959 —Nos. 1-9

Ceylon, king of Candea, Cota, Ceytavaca, Dambadan, Anoraya-pore, Jafnapatan, Prince of Uva, Matura, Dinavaka, the four corles, Grand Duke of the 7 Corles, Matale, Count of Cotiar, Trinquelemale Batecalo, Velase, Vintana, Drembra, Panciapato, Veta, Puteloan, Vallare, Gale, Belligaon, Marquis of Duranura, Ratienura, Tripene, Acciapato, Lord of the havens of Alican, Columbo, Nigombo, Chilau, Madampe, Calpentgu, Aripiture, Manar and of the Fisheries of the Gems and Pearls, Lord of the Golden Sun". Though in Sinhalese history the title of *Raja Sinha* was assumed by the son of Mayadunne, it is probable that his great grandfather Vira Prakarmabahu VII was also famous as Raja Sinha.

The most glorious chapter in the history of Ceylon was the reign of Parakrama Bahu I from 1153 to 1186. Though the succeeding three centuries brought forth several ambitious and brave kings, but none of them could become the sole ruler of the island. The country was divided into principalities and petty powers. Jaffnapatan became a Tamil settlement. Under the circumstances there were continual threats of invasion but it goes to the credit of Sinhalese kings that they never allowed the independence of the island to be jeopardised. The capital was changed at intervals and this created dangers of invasion, but the Sinhalese kings were determined to defend their country with all their might.

The Portuguese came in 1505. It was a chance that a Portuguese fleet going towards Maldiv islands was blown off its course and reached Colombo. The Portuguese Commander met the king and saw his capital. This was the beginning of the Portuguese interest in Ceylon. In 1518 they begged for a strip of land near the harbour and got it. Shri J. Vijayatunga writes in his book 'Island Story' that "it was a propitious time for

pirate adventurers. The Sinhalese kingdom was now split up among Bhuvanka Bahu VII and his two brothers, Mayadunne and Rayigam Bandara. Mayadunne, whose capital was at Sitavaka (Avisawella today), was the strongest of the three. Even if he did not quite succeed in his ambition of making one kingdom of the three, he left behind a son, Raja Sinha I, in whom the Portuguese were to meet a skilled soldier and later (when he became king) a resolute monarch....".

As has been said above, in the times under review, Ceylon was ruled by petty rajahs or chieftains, both Sinhalese and Tamil. They were all subordinate in a greater or lesser degree to the emperor Prakarma Bahu VIII. The power of the Emperor had declined greatly. The trade of the Island had gone into the hands of the Muslim merchants of Malabar. The Portuguese were trying to monopolise it. During these years, before the arrival of Guru Nanak, a Kshatriya named Mansukh had come from the Punjab with merchandise. He had received the blessings of the Guru in his home State.

It has been recorded in the 'Story of Ceylon'¹ that Prakarma Bahu VIII of Kotte or Raja Shivnabh "had agreed to pay tribute to the king of Portugal in return for protection Though the Sinhala kingdom declined and its kings were limited to narrower domains, the more splendid grew the religious cults with which kingdom and king were associated. The development of the cult of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha between the 12th and the 16th centuries, the magnificence of its rituals, the belief in its miraculous powers, the particular veneration in which it was held as an object of worship as well as guaranteeing the king his right to the kingdom, must have derived some of their fervour from desperation as well as from hope, even in periods

1. "The story of Ceylon" by E. F. C. Ludowyk, published by Faber and Faber, 24 Russell Square, London, 1st Edition, 1962.

of defeat, that magically the possession of the relic would assure the ultimate triumph of the kingdom”.

The Sinhalese chronicles make very little mention of the visit of Guru Nanak in Ceylon because the memorials erected in the time of Prakarma Bahu VIII were preserved till the reign of his grandson Mayadunne, but later on due to perverse circumstances, they have gone into oblivion.

Mansukh, whose mention has been made above, came into contact with Raja Prakarma Bahu VIII (or Raja Shivrabh) in about A.D. 1509 and with his life of strong devotion transformed the king to such an extent that he became a Sikh of Guru Nanak and discarded his old religion. He surrendered himself completely to this great preceptor in absentia. He even wanted to visit the Punjab and meet the Guru, but Mansukh advised him to wait because the intense love of the Raja for the Guru would certainly bring the Guru to the island.

Mansukh had returned to his native State when Guru Nanak reached Ceylon in 1512 A.D. The religious-minded and wholly devoted king had given the regency of the state to his two sons and was expecting the Great Guru any moment.

When the Guru set his foot on the island, the king was not in the capital. He was staying at Matecalo or Batticaloa situated on the eastern coast of Ceylon. The Guru accompanied by his companions wended his way towards Trincomalee. It is not known whether the Guru travelled towards this seaside resort by land or by sea. It is just possible that he might have boarded a ship at Rameshwaram with his companions for Trincomalee.

Trincomalee is 184 miles by rail from Colombo and on the eastern coast of Ceylon. It was a very important post of Ceylon in those days, natural harbour with very deep water. There

was a great Hindu temple at the site of Fort Frederick which was erected by the Tamils. It was destroyed by the Portuguese when they captured Trincomalee in 1622, but the site of the temple still commands great respect.

From Trincomalee the Guru went to Batticaloa, the old name for Batticaloa is Maticaloa or Mattok Kulam Pur or Matakulam. The Tamils called the city Mattok Kulam but the Dutch or English named it Batticaloa, which is situated on an island in a salt-water lake and is famous for the 'singing fish'. The Guru stayed in the king's neglected garden. It is said that the withered away plants sprout forth the new leaves and blossoms and this attracted the attention of the gardeners who intimated the arrival of 'a great man' to the king. The king, according to Sikh chronicles, tested the saint whether he was actually the Guru from the Punjab. Several beauties and niceties were sent for him, but he spoke of simple living and high thinking, rejecting all the offers. He sang a song while Mardana played upon the rebec. The burden of the song was as follows : 'we are good in words and not in deeds, but we imitate those who stand at the gate of the Lord'. The charming ladies who came to tempt the Guru were themselves defeated and bowed before the great spiritual leader. The Guru was found out by the king. It is written in the Sikh chronicles that the Guru now tested the faith of the Raja, who now surrendered wholly to the Guru. It is said that he carried the Guru to his palace on his back and sacrificed his son in order to present the meat of his body to the Guru. This story may not be correct : the underlying idea is that the king was put to hard test, but he did not waver in his faith. About twenty miles south of Batticaloa there is a village named Kurukul Madap which means 'Guru's village'. The people remember the Guru even now with profound regards.¹

1. Dr. Kirpal Singh of Punjabi University, Patiala has given this information in one of his Papers contributed to Historical Conference held in his University.

From Batticaloa, the Guru moved towards Dibar—a small town (may be an islet) with the king. The chronicles state that it is situated at a distance of about eight miles towards north from Batticaloa. As has been recorded, there is a memorial of the Guru at this place. There is a Sikh temple which is named *udāsī Math* because the *udāsīs* have remained the custodians of this memorial. Since the Guru set his foot here, it is also known as 'Charan Padak'. It is also recorded that there is a free kitchen at this place. On one of the pillars in this temple the Guru's great poem *Japji* is inscribed in Sinhalese characters. The famous Sikh Changa Bhatra is said to have raised this memorial.

From Dibar, the Guru went to Kandy which is known as the heart of Ceylon. It is at a distance of 72 miles from Colombo. It is also said to be the spiritual home of Buddhists because the temple of the Tooth stands there. This temple enshrines the sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha. But in the time of Guru Nanak, this relic was not at Kandy, it was at Kotte, because Kotte was the capital and "the Tooth relic moved with kings who set up new capitals, for without it there could be neither kingdom nor a king."¹

In Kandy besides the Temple of the Tooth, there are several other temples of historical interest, e.g., Asgiriya temple, Gangaramaya temple, Degaldoruna temple.

After leaving Kandy, the Guru visited Nuwara Eliya, Saffragam (or Sabaragamuwa or Savargam or Swaram), Badulla, Ratnapura and Kotte. Nuwara Eliya is called the sanatorium of Ceylon. The famous Ashoka Van where Sita ji was kept in captivity by Ravana is situated at Pushalapur near Nuwara Eliya. Pussalawa (Pushalapur) and Ramboda are situated

1. 'The Story of Ceylon', by E. F. C. Ludowyk.

between Kandy and Nuwara Eliya. It is said that king Ravana used to take his bath at Ramboda. In this area there are several places connected with the Indian Epic Ramayana. Near Nuwara Eliya there is a stream named Nanu oya, which most probably had been named after the name of Great Guru in honour of his visit.

Badulla is the Capital of the province of Uva and Ratnapur the capital of the province of Sabaragamuwa. The former is an ancient city, but very few traces of antiquity are found now. It has two large Buddhist temples. Ratnapur is famous for its gems. It is surrounded by pits from which sapphires and topazes are extracted. After visiting Badulla, Nuwara Eliya and Ratnapur the Guru climbed the Adam's peak which is considered sacred by Buddhists, Mohammedans and Hindus. There is an impression of the foot, which for Buddhists is that of Buddha, for Mohammedans that of Adam and for Hindus that of Shiva.

After visiting the Adam's Peak, the Guru went to Kotte, which was the capital in those days. Then he went to Sitawak and spent considerable time with the king discussing the Yogic practices. These discussions are contained in *Pran Sangli* and were recorded by Saido and Seeho, the two companions of the Guru.

It is said that the Guru stayed in Ceylon for about a year. During this period he visited all the important places and preached his sermons at several places. There is no definite information about the Guru's visit to Anorayapora or Anuradhapura. It is probable that he visited this important ancient city on his return journey. He might have visited it during the beginning of his visit to Ceylon, if he travelled by land from Mannar to Trincomalee. It is called "the buried city of Ceylon" and is famous

for ancient ruins. It has several dagobas and monastic buildings. A most important object of interest is the sacred Bo-Tree, which was originally brought from Buddh Gaya. It is learnt that the Guru is remembered even now in the area surrounding Anuradhapura as "Nana Buddha".

On his return journey the Guru went to Jaffnapatan (also called Japapatam) or Jaffna and also visited the surrounding islets. Being at the northern tip Jaffna has been vulnerable to south-India infiltration. In earlier period it remained a Sinhala settlement, for some time Nagas inhabited it and afterwards Tamil (Chola) dynasty occupied it. When Guru Nanak reached there, Jaffna was ruled by a Śhaivite king.

In Jaffna and the surrounding areas there are several Hindu temples of note, out of which the most famous are Kandaswamy Kovil, Moviddopuram; Kandaswamy Kovil, Nallur; Negatambiram Kovil, Nakarkovil; Nagilese Kovil, Keerimalai; Sellasannathi Kovil, Tondaimanar; Perumal Kovil, Vallipuram; Nagapooshani Ammal Kovil on the island of Nayinativu etc.

The Guru stayed in Jaffna and its surroundings for some time. It is understood that there is a memorial named 'Guruka' at Begharey in the island of Nayinativu. It is probable that the small island might even have been named after the name of the Guru. This island contains one of the three Ceylon sites which are said to have been visited by Buddha in person. Besides Hindu temples (Kovils) in Jaffna and surrounding areas, there are Sinhala and Buddhist antiquities also, giving evidence of former Sinhala authority. From Jaffna the Guru embarked on a ship for Tuticorin and left his footprints on the island, which are disappearing very fastly. A timely action may help us in locating the places mentioned in Sikh chronicles viz. "Charan Padka' in Dibar, the Sikh temple in Savargam, in Kotte, in

Sitawak (Aviswella), Memorial in Nayinativu island, Nirankari Siddh in Bijaygoda etc.

Some scholars still doubt about the visit of the Guru to Ceylon, because the memorials could not be preserved. But the account given in "Haqiqat Rah Mukam" is sufficient evidence of the Guru's arrival in Ceylon. The name of Raja Shivrabh has perplexed many. From the word Shivrabh they conclude etymologically that the Raja was a Shaivite and in this case he must have been a ruler of Jaffnapatam. Bhai Vir Singh has based his research on the same conclusion.¹ Dr. W. H. McLeod has also followed the same line.² He says in his essay, "The Hakikat Rah claims that Raja Sivrabh was the grandfather of Mayadunne. It errs in locating Mayadunne in Jaffna (his domain was Sitawaka in the south west of the island)....." Though Dr. McLeod has mentioned Sitawak, he failed to note the same word written as Sitawad by mistake by the copyist in 'Hakikat Rah Mukam'. That is the reason why he has written, "Accordingly Hakikat Rah must be rejected as evidence of a visit to Ceylon by Guru Nanak. The conclusion to which this analysis points is that if Raja Sivrabh did exist he had no connection with Ceylon..." But the findings in this chapter will convince the reader about the visit of Guru Nanak in Ceylon and effort will be made by the Sikhs to raise memorials at different places after a thorough research. Some chronicles have mentioned the name of Maradana railway station in connection with the visit of

1. Guur Nanak Chamatkar.

2. Journal of Indian History April 1967—Procedure in analysing the sources for the life of Guru Nanak. Also see his book "Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion", published by Oxford University Press, 1968.

Guru Nanak and his companions.¹ Maradana is a junction one mile from Colombo and a line runs to Aviswella and Ratnapura. Maradana is a Sinhalese word and it might have been mistaken for Mardana, the companion of Guru Nanak, but still it needs further research.

It has now come to light that there is a passage in the Sanskrit language scribbled in very small characters in the original writing on a slab now preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Anuradhapura (Number in Museum Register M III). This passage is said to have been written on the orders of king Dharma Prakarmabahu IX, the son of Raja Shivnabh, who is said to have ascended the throne in 1493 A.C. In fact he was appointed regent of the territory in 1508 but he might have been appointed as Governor of the territory in 1493. The king was his father Vira Prakarmabahu VII. Dharma Prakarmabahu IX was of no great significance as mentioned above. He promised to adopt the discipline of the Guru, but the Brahmins of his court, fraudulently, stood in his way.²

1. Guru Asthan Darshan, written and published by Bhai Inder Singh, p. 84.

2. See Appendix VI for this specific information contained in the paper entitled "Guru Nanak and Ceylon" read by Dr. Saddhamangala Karunaratna, M.A. (Ceylon) Ph.D. (Cantaob) Asstt. Commissioner of Archaeology, Ceylon, in the International Seminar on the Life and Teachings of Guru Nanak held in Punjabi University, Patiala on September, 3-5, 1969.

KERALA

From Tuticorin, Palamcotta and cape Comorin, the southernmost tip of the Indian Peninsula, the Guru travelled towards Kerala and entered the Trivandrum district. The Guru reached Trivandrum, formerly the capital of Travancore and now the capital of Kerala. The new state of Kerala comprises Travancore and Cochin. Kerala has also been called "Triya Raj" (the kingdom of the woman). This is probably due to the ancient custom of descent from Chera rulers through the female line which is still prevalent in the state, especially in the Nair community. Another reason for such a name has been mentioned. It is said that Surpa Nakha, the sister of Ravana ruled over this territory.

There are several temples in Trivandrum, but the chief of them is the temple of Padamnabh. After Trivandrum, the chief towns in south Kerala are Quilon, Alleppey, Kottayam, Ernakulam and Trichur. The Guru passed through these towns and the districts named after them. Quilon and Alleppey are the ports. Quilon had been named by Marco Polo as Kailum. Alleppey is the chief port of Travancore. Kottayam is the chief Christian centre in Travancore. Ernakulam had been the capital of Cochin state. Just near Ernakulam is Kuchi Bander or Cochin. In 1510, when the Guru left for his second journey, Albuquerque was its Portuguese Viceroy. Trichur is known as Parashuram Kshetra. It consists a huge Shaiva temple, known as Vadakunnathan temple. As regards Parashuramakshetra, Shri Radhakamal Mukerjee writes in

his "A history of Indian Civilization",¹ "Tradition indeed describes the origin of the coast of Malabar to Parashurama who received it as a gift from the ocean-god Varuna, and according to another account he drove back the ocean and cut fissures or passes (Krauncha) in the Western Ghats with the blows of his axe. Parashurama Kshetra comprises seven divisions : Kerala, Tulunga, Gaurāshtra, Karāhāta, Barālāta, Barbara and Konkāṇa."

When Guru Nanak passed through Malabar or Kerala territory, he found the flourishing Christian community in the area, chiefly Nestorian. He met the prominent religious leaders and held discussions with them regarding their tenets.

From Trichur district, the Guru entered Palghat district. He passed through Palghat and reached Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu State. The attractive sight of Coimbatore is the temple of Perur. Then the Guru passed through Nilgiri hills in Kerala and went westward towards the sea-coast, where he visited Calicut. It was here that Vasco de Gama arrived on May 20, 1498. This town was then under the Suzerainty of Vijayanagar and contained a Hindu temple. After visiting Calicut, the Guru moved into Coorg, now a part of Karnatak state.

It is said that in Kerala the Guru met the ruler of the state who was a descendant of Rama Raja and who was a potter by caste. He became the disciple of the Guru.

1. Ed. Oct., 1956, Vol. I. Ancient and classical traditions p. 93.

MAHARASHTRA

Guru Nanak touched the territory of Maharashtra twice, once while going out on his second journey and for the second time when he was returning home.

On his outward journey the Guru reached Ramtek in Maharashtra from Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh. Ramtek is at a distance of about twenty-four miles north of Nagpur. There is a Ramagiri hill near Ramtek. On its peak, there is Sri Rama temple, with images of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. He is said to have remained here for four months. The famous acharya Jogan Prakash in this area belonged to Ganapatya sect; he was highly impressed by the personality of the Guru and became his disciple along with his followers. At Ramtek there is a memorial commemorating the visit of the Guru.

From Ramtek, the Guru travelled through Tumsar and Kamptee and reached Nagpur. Among the inhabitants of the district of Nagpur, there are many aborigines who are called Gonds; they wear only a cloth round their waist. These people worship snakes and cholera and small-pox deities. The Guru forbade them from such a worship. When Guru Nanak visited the area in the early sixteenth century, it was ruled by the Gonds.

From Nagpur, the Guru reached Amraoti from whence he visited Akola, Malikapur and Buldana in Maharashtra and Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh. In the Berar districts of Akola, Amraoti and Buldana, the soil is black and best suited for the growth of cotton. From Buldana, the Guru journeyed towards Nander passing through Hingoli, Aundh and Basmat. The

Hingoli area was a centre of the Thugs, for whose reformation the Guru visited the place. In *Puratan Janamsakhi*, there is a mention of the meeting of the Guru with the Thugs.

At Aundh the Saint Namdev lived at that time. He had already met the Guru at Varanasi, therefore, he came to welcome the Guru to his place along with his disciples. Namdev had been a worshipper of Vishnu and used to bow before his images. But the Guru discussed with him the shortcomings of idol-worship and benefits of the true devotion of the Formless One. It is said that the saint followed the new discipline after this. It is said that at Aundh, the high-caste people turned Namdev out of the temple, but the Lord in order to be in the sight of the pining devotee revolved it.

At Nander, the Guru met an old Muslim saint named Lakkar Shah, who expired after the long-awaited blessings of the Guru. Besides his grave, now stands a Sikh temple named Mal Tekri. Nander is now doubly blessed place for the Sikhs because besides the memorial of the first Guru, there is Abchal Nagar, Hazoor Sahib at Nander which is one of the four thrones of Sikhism.

On his return journey, the Guru entered Maharashtra from Goa. He passed through Rajapur, a town near the sea-coast in Ratnagiri district and Ratnagiri, a sea-port of Maharashtra, from where the Guru is said to have visited Pandharpur on the right bank of Bhima river. At this place the Guru visited the famous shrine of Vithoba (Vithal or Beethal) who is considered an incarnation of Vishnu.

From Pandharpur, the Guru went to Poona. It is said that at about three miles from Poona, there is a memorial in honour of the visit of the Guru which is called Ram Tekri. From Poona, the Guru reached Bombay where it is said, the Guru visited the Masjid of Haji Ali on the sea-coast at Worli.

From Bombay, the Guru travelled to Nasik, which is considered one of the most sacred places of Hindus. It is situated on the bank of the sacred river Godavari. The portion of the town with objects of interest and situated on the left bank is called Panchavati. It was visited by Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. It was here that Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana met Lord Rama and her nose and ears were chopped off by Lakshmana. After visiting Panchavati, the Guru travelled further and entered Gujarat after passing through Dadra and Nagar Haveli area.

GUJARAT

The Guru touched the territory of Gujarat thrice ; for the first time while going out on his second journey, for the second time while returning home during his second journey and for the third time during his fourth journey when he entered Gujarat from Sind in order to board a ship for the Middle East from one of its ports. The word 'Gujarat' has been derived from Gurjar, which is supposed to be a sub-tribe of Huns, who migrated from the Punjab and settled in Gujarat. Some of the parts of Gujarat and referred to in Purana Literature as Anarta, Aparanta, Lad and Saurashtra. The area of Gujarat covers Kutch, Saurashtra and the territories between the rivers Banas and Damanganga. The rivers that flow through Gujarat are Banas, Sabarmati, Mahi, Tapi, Narmada, Bhadar, Shetrunji and Bhogavo. The prominent mountains are Girnar, Shetrunjo, Chotilo, Bardo, Arasur and Pavagadh.

During his second *Udāsī*, while going on an outward journey, the Guru is said to have entered Gujarat from Mount Abu in Rajasthan, which remained for some time under the dominion of Gujarat rulers. At this time the Guru toured through Patan, Idar and Ahmadnagar in Gujarat and then again entered Rajasthan territory. The Pandavas during their period of forest-dwelling had visited Patan. Bhima killed the demon Hidimba here. The significant journey of the Guru through Gujarat begins when he was returning home after visiting Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnatak, Tamil Nadu, Ceylon, Kerala and Maharashtra. The Guru

entered Gujarat from Maharashtra. He toured along the coastal region and visited important towns and ports. The first port that he visited in Gujarat was Surat.

Surat has been a famous port of India in mediaeval age, Tapi river flows at a distance of three miles. There are several temples in this city, some dedicated to Shiva and some to other deities including Amba goddess and the twin Ashvinis. It is said that Ashvinis practised austerities at Ashvini ghat on the bank of Tapi river. It is surmised that the Guru visited this city twice. He visited it for the second time in his fourth journey when he embarked on a ship here for Aden. It is also likely that he might have visited East and South Africa. The Gujarat traders used to travel to Zanzibar and Madagascar islands and he might have visited these islands along with his Gujarat Sikhs. At present there exists a Nanak Bari at this place.

From Surat, the Guru travelled to Broach, another port of the state, which is situated on the bank of Narmada river. It is also known as Bhrigu Kshetra, because it was the *Ashrama* of Bhrigu. Raja Bali is said to have performed here ten *ashwamedha yagnas*. There are many temples on the bank of Narmada. It is said that this city contains fifty-five holy places of pilgrimage. When the Guru reached here, several Pandits gathered around him for a discussion. Kabir, the famous saint, who was staying at *Kābir Bārā* island in Narmada, at a distance of about ten miles from Broach, came to meet the Guru for the second time. The place where the Guru stayed is known as *Nanak Bārī* and is situated on the bank of the river, a few yards away from the Narmada bridge. There is also a memorial in honour of the visit of Kabir to this place just adjacent to Gurdwara *Nanak Bārī*. It is said that at *Kābir Bārā*, a copy of Guru Granth Sahib has been kept in great reverence by the *Kabir-Panthis*.

From Broach, the Guru travelled on the bank of Narmada river and passed through Rajpipla and Chandod. There is a *Nanak Bārī* at Rajpipla. There are seven sacred places at Chandod. The old mythological story of Chand and Mund is said to have occurred in this area. From Chandod, the Guru went to Baroda where there are several temples of gods and goddesses including those of Vithal Natha, Khandoba and Ganesha. From Baroda the Guru reached Cambay, which, at one time, had been a very famous port of Gujarat. From Cambay the Guru proceeded towards Ahmedabad and passed through Dekor, which contains a very beautiful temple of Lord Krishna. At Ahmedabad, there is a *Nanak Bārī*. There are *Nanak Bārīs* at Baroda and Cambay.

Ahmedabad is the capital of Gujarat and a great industrial city. It was founded in 1411 by Ahmed Shah I on Sabarmati River. When the Guru visited it in 1513-1514, it was considered the "handsomest town in Hindustan". From Ahmedabad the Guru toured towards Kathiawad and passed through Kaira and Dholka. It is learnt that at Dholka also there is a *Nanak Bārī*. In Kaira there is a place known as Nanakalodia.

In Kathiawad, the Guru covered mostly the coastal areas. The first important town that the Guru is said to have visited is Palitāṇā where he reached after passing through Wadhwan. The importance of this city is due to its approach to Shatrunjaya, the sacred hill which contains hundreds of Jaina temples. The first temple built on this hill was Adinath temple, constructed in honour of the first Tirthankara in 1960 A.D. The Guru held discussions here with the religious leaders of Jaina community.

From Palitāṇā, the Guru took a westward course and reached Junagadh. The old name of Junagadh was Girinar

after the name of the sacred hill. Girnar, situated near the city. Before its capture by Sultan Mahmud Bigara of Gujarat in about 1472 A.D., it was the capital of Chavda Rajput kings since 875 A.D. The Guru is said to have met here two famous saints, one Hindu, i.e. Narsi and the other a Muslim, i.e. Data Ganj Bakhsh. They spent some time in each other's company. The contemporary Nawab of the place, Nawab Faiz Bakhsh was greatly impressed. There is a Dharamsala in memory of the visit of the Guru. It is said that the Nawab kept in this Dharamsala, a wooden sandal of the Guru in token of his visit. This Dharamsala is situated just near the Upparkot fort.

From Junagadh, the Guru paid a visit to the sacred Girnar hill. Here he met the Sadhus of various orders, who were attracted towards him when they heard his hymn sung in his own melodious voice. The famous saint of the place Girnari Baba was highly pleased to meet him and listen to his discourses. His words had a great effect on the minds of those who met him. From the hill-tops of Girnar the Guru had a view of the Gir forest.

There are several tombs, temples and caves in the area surrounding Junagadh. It is said that there is a memorial named 'Charan Pādakā' on the summit of Girnar in honour of the visit of the Guru. There is also a 'Charan Pādakā' of Ramanand here.

After Junagadh and Girnar, the Guru turned towards the south and reached the famous Prabhas Kshetra comprising the ports of Veraval and Somnath. Between these two ports of Veraval and Patan Somnath, there is Bhalakā Tirtha temple commemorating the death of Lord Krishna. There is also Triveni, a confluence of three rivers near Veraval. Somnath

is famous in history for the Jyotirlingam temple, which was destroyed by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1024 A.D. The area of Somnath Patan and Veraval has been sacred for both Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

From Veraval the Guru travelled along the coast and passed through Madhavpur and Porbander before reaching Dwarka. Shri Krishna is said to have been married at Madhavpur. The old name of Porbander was Sudamapuri. There is an old temple of Sudama here. It is said that at Porbander, the Guru decried the practice of wearing a lingam around the neck. He said that the devotee does not see the Lord in his house and wears the lingam around his neck. He just wanders in illusion and merely churns water without realizing anything. The stonelingam, whom he calls the Lord, leads him to his doom. When the people heard the views of the Guru, they held discussions with him and many of them became his followers.

Dwarka or Gomati Dwarka is situated on the western tip of the peninsula. It is said to have been founded by Lord Krishna when he came from Mathura. It is one of the seven sacred places of pilgrimage of Hindus. The important temple of Dwarka is the Dwarkanath temple, erected in honour of Lord Krishna. Near Dwarka, there is a small island, which is known as Bet Dwarka. This island is associated with Vishnu who killed the demon Sankhasur here and transformed his wife into *Tulsi* (basil) plant. The temple of Lord Vishnu commemorating this incident is said to have been dedicated to Satya Bhama, the consort of Lord Krishna. At Bet Dwarka there is a Dharamsala commemorating the visit of the Guru.

From Dwarka the Guru travelled along the sea-coast in the Gulf of Kutch and entered the territory named Rann of Kutch. A place 18 miles from Jamnagar towards Dwarka was

visited by Guru Nanak while proceeding towards Kutch. The first important place in Kutch visited by him was Anjar. The Guru stayed in the garden of Raghu Bhatti. There is a Dharamsala here commemorating the visit of the Guru and is managed by Suthras. From Anjar the Guru went to Mandvi passing through Mundra. The Guru stayed here in the garden of Phulwari Shah where a Nishan (flag) commemorates his visit. The Guru met Shivgiri, a *Gosain Sadhu* at this place and forbade him from worshipping the Bhairavi Chakra of Bala Sundari and instructed him regarding the right path. Even up to this day none of his followers is Vāma Mārgī.

From Mandvi, the Guru reached Bhuj, from whence he travelled to Narayansar which is at a distance of about eighty miles from Bhuj. It is a sacred place for Vaishnavas. About twenty-four miles from Narayansar, there is a prominent temple of Ashapuri Devi. The Guru visited this temple also. There are many temples of this goddess in Gujarat. She is the family goddess of most of the people. The main purpose of the visit of Guru Nanak to the temples of gods and goddesses of Hindus was to turn them away from idol-worship and also advise them to worship God who is the creator of these gods and goddesses.

After visiting the temple of Ashapuri Devi, the Guru went to Lakhpat, which is a port situated on the sea coast of Kori creek and then entered Sind.

III

THE THIRD JOURNEY

HIMACHAL PRADESH

During his third journey, the first state visited by the Guru in 1514 was Himachal Pradesh. At present this Pradesh comprises the districts and areas of Chamba, Kangra, Kulu, Lahaul, Spiti, Mandi, Bilaspur, Mahasu, Kinnaur, Sirmur, Hamirpur, Una and Solan. After passing through Gurdaspur and Pathankot in the Punjab, the Guru entered Kangra area. At Kangra he visited Mahamaya temple, which is considered one of the Shaktipeeth temples. From Kangra the Guru went to Chamba *via* Dharamsala, which was famous for its old Shri Lakshmi Narayan temple. It is probable that in Chamba area, the Guru visited Bharmaur (which was sanctified by the visit of nine Nathas and eighty-four Siddhas) and the sacred Mani Maheshlake. The Guru returned to Kangra from Chamba and visited the old temple of the goddess Jawala Mukhi at the town of the same name. It is situated on the road from Kangra to Nadaun. The temple is built up against a rocky cliff from a cleft in which an inflammable gas comes forth. The flames are seen rising up in the clefts. The Hindus believe that in olden times, the goddess appeared at this site at the propitiation of the defeated gods and helped them to vanquish the demons. The temple of Jawala Mukhi is also considered as one of the fifty-one *Shaktipeeths*. The Guru is said to have met Arjan, the Hindu divine and held discussion with him just near Gorakh Dibbhi where there is a temple of the saint. A Sikh temple nearby commemorates the visit of the Guru.

From Jawala Mukhi the Guru entered Kullu valley and

visited the important spots including Triloknath. Triloknath is situated at a distance of about 28 miles from the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers and is famous for a temple of the same name. Then the Guru visited Manikaran about twenty miles from Bhuntar. This place is famous for its hot-water spring and is associated with Lord Shiva. A Sikh temple now exists just near the spring, where two-three tanks are constructed for taking a bath. The site is situated on the bank of Parbati river at the foot of the mountain named Harendragiri.

Then the Guru proceeded to Mandi Suket. At Mandi he forbade the ruler from idol-worship and stressed upon him the necessity of devotion towards Brahman. From Mandi, the Guru visited Rawalsar which is famous for its sacred lake. There are several temples situated on the bank of this lake. Seven small pieces of earth are seen floating on the surface of the lake on which plants have grown up. It is said that the sage Lomas performed austerities at this place. Pandavas passed through this place and Guru Gobind Singh rested on a nearby hillock for some time. There is a Gurdwara at the place, where the Guru stayed. Besides the temple of sage Lomas, there are temples of Shankar and Lakshmi Narayan. Towards the south-west of the lake, there is a Buddhist Shrine known as "Mani-Pani", which attracts several Tibetans during the year, who circumambulate the lake.

From Rawalsar, the Guru returned to Mandi and passed through Bilaspur district and reached Kiratpur (in the Punjab). At this place, the Guru met the Muslim divine named Buddhan Shah who bowed before his spiritual greatness. The *Faqir* presented milk to the Guru which the Guru did not drink, but left with the saint saying that he would drink it on another occasion. Sikh chronicles have recorded that this milk was preserved in a pot and was later on drunk by Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of

the sixth Sikh Guru, Hargobind, when he appeared in the physical form of Guru Nanak under the instructions of his father. There is a Gurdwara at Kiratpur in honour of the visit of the Guru.

From Kiratpur, the Guru is said to have reached Pinjore (now in Haryana). A fair was being held at that time. The Guru met the religious leaders and divines and instructed them regarding the right path for their spiritual uplift. There is a Gurdwara at Pinjore which commemorates the visit of the Guru. From Pinjore, the Guru reached Joharsar Tirtha which is situated near Spatu (Subathu) and is at a distance of about three kos from Dagshai. At this place the Guru spoke against the usual practice of the people of shaving the hair of young children and killing animals for feasting the sadhus. He asked them not to be misled by them because they were the followers of mammon. He backoned them to lead a virtuous life and remember the name of the Lord. It is stated that up to this day, the people of the area follow the instructions of the Guru. A Gurdwara at Joharsar commemorates the visit of the Guru.

Then the Guru travelled towards the north and at a distance of about thirty kos from Joharsar, he rested on the summit of a mountain. The people of the nearby villages gathered around the Guru and under the leadership of their saint Mahi requested the Guru to make provision of water for them because there was a great scarcity of water in that area. The Guru is said to have touched a stone with his stick and the water came out of the mountain. Mahi constructed a tank for the storage of water which is known as Mahisar and the place is also known by the same name. The people of the place are disciples of the Guru.

It is said that the Guru became well-known in this mountainous area. His influence penetrated beyond the borders of

India. The Indians and Tibetans both bowed to him with profound veneration. It has been learnt that on the road from Simla up to the border of Tibet, the pictures of the Guru are seen drawn at short distances on the way.

The area recently added to Himachal Pradesh is the area of Lahaul and Spiti. There had been a great impact of Buddhism in this part of the State. The Buddhist land in Himachal Pradesh runs from the snow-clad Spiti valley and reaches the Shipki pass which is the old sentinel of the historic Bashahar State. According to Sikh chronicles the Guru visited Bashahar. It is sometimes mentioned as *Bislar Desha*. The territory above the Shipki pass belonged to the ruler of Tibet and the territory below Shipki belonged to the ruler of Bashahar. Ancient caravan routes from the mainland wound up over high ranges of the Zaskar up to the Shipki pass.

From the Shipki pass in Himachal Pradesh, the Guru continued his journey to the Lipu Lekh pass near the Nepalese northern border which is the land of Kedar Kahetra of the kingdom of Brahmapura of Kumaon and Garhwal.

NEPAL

Guru Nanak entered the territory of Nepal in 1514-15 from the border area of Uttar Pradesh. The independent kingdom of Nepal is situated between the sub-continent of India and Tibet. Its area is about 54,000 square miles. Some of the highest mountains lie within its territory viz. Everest, Kinchinjunga and Dhaulagiri. On its eastern side flows the river Kausiki, on the western the Trishul ganga. There is Kailash towards the North. It is mentioned in Varaha-Purana that originally there was a lake in the Nepal valley named Nāga Bāsa, which was 14 miles long and four miles broad.

Nepal may be divided into three parts, i.e., Tarai, the area below the hills, the valley of Nepal and the mountainous area bordering on Tibet. Hinduism and Buddhism have flourished in the State side by side since a very long time. Buddha was born in the Sakya territory adjoining Nepal. Lumbini, a holy place of Buddhist pilgrimage is situated in west Tarai. The Cult of Shiva has also gained a significant position in Nepal. This god is also worshipped as Bhairava. Pashupatinath in Kathmandu is the holiest of Shiva shrines in Nepal. At Palpa, there is a famous temple of Bhairava. Besides Shiva temples, there are temples of Varaha (an incarnation of Vishnu), Vaman (another incarnation of Vishnu), Krishna (another incarnation of Vishnu), Parvati (the consort of Shiva), Ganesh (the son of Shiva) and Machhendranath (the head of the Nath sect).

The main purpose of the visit of Guru Nanak to Nepal

was to educate the people regarding the unity of God and to forbid them from the worship of gods.

From Sitamarhi in Bihar the Guru crossed the border of Nepal and reached Janakpur. This place is the birthplace of Sita, the consort of Ram Chandar, the hero of Ramayana. From Janakpur the Guru went to Chatra near Biratnagar, where he visited among the mountains, on the bank of Kausiki or Sunkosi, the ancient place of pilgrimage, known as Varaha-Kshetra or Koka Mukh. The word Chatra is a *tadbhava* from Kshetra. People of north Bihar visit the holy Varaha Kshetra with faith and devotion every year. The temple is situated at the confluence of the Kosis. It is said that the Varaha or boar incarnation of Vishnu first appeared at this place in East Tarai. There is a Dharamsala at Chatra in the memory of the visit of the Guru. It is managed by Kanphata Yogis.

It is recorded in chronicles that the Guru visited the fort of Dhomri and then proceeded to the fair at Brahmkund *via* Shivpur. The people used to worship Yakshas. The Guru advised them to worship One God. Till this day, the Guru is remembered by the people as Nanak Rishi. After Brahm Kund the Guru visited Lakhanpur and walking on the bank of Palti lake passed through Hawal Khanchi Range, Krishna Tal and Dhaulgirli and reached Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.

At Kathmandu, the Guru stayed near the Pashupatinath temple on the bank of Baghmati Ganga. He asked Mardana to play upon the rebec and himself sang one of his hymns. The yogis and ascetics of other cults gathered round the Guru and held discussions. The Guru forbade them from idol-worship and made them devotees of the Lord. The king of Nepal, Raja Sasodhia Rajput Mahan Ranbir Singh came to

the Guru and received secular as well as religious instructions. It is said that with the blessings of the Guru the king had two sons. There are now two Dharamsalas in the memory of the visit of the Guru, one managed by Nirmalās and the other by Udāsīs. The Gurdwara is situated on a hillock on the western bank of river Bishnumati.

There are many temples of different gods in the picturesque and magnificent Kathmandu valley. This valley includes the tricity of Kathmandu (old name Kantipur), Patan (old name Lalitpur) and Bhadgaon (old name Bhaktapur). The temple of Swayambhunath is located on a hillock two miles west of Kathmandu. The temple of Pashupatinath stands on the western bank of Bagmati, about three miles north-east of Kathmandu. It contains Siva's Lingam. The Guheshwari temple of Parbati lies a mile beyond Pashupatinath temple on the left side of Bagmati. The largest Buddhist chaitya named Bodhnath lies about one mile north of Pashupatinath temple. Another temple of Lord Shiva named Gokarneshwar is situated about two miles north-east of Bodhnath temple. The Shekha Narayan temple contains a stone relief of Vaman, the dwarf incarnation of Vishnu.

The Guru visited the major temples of the valley. There is a temple of Dattatreya which is said to have been made from the trunk of a single tree. According to the *Janamsakhi* of Bhai Bala, the Guru met Dattatreya, the mythological figure. But it must be some high-priest of this temple whom the Guru met. It is probable that the Guru visited the temple at other places viz. Lumbini, Pokhara, Palpa, Changu, etc. Changu is an ancient historical place where there is a famous Narayan temple of Lord Vishnu.

On the base of Sagarmatha (Mount Everest) in the village of Solo Khumbu, there is Thyangboche monastery which com-

mands the most beautiful Himalayan scenery. This monastery is one of the holy spots for the Buddhists. It is about 170 miles north east of Kathmandu valley. In 1964, Major M. S. Kohli, Lieutenant Commander and Leader of Everest Expedition visited the monastery. He saw a large number of sacred texts, the original manuscripts stacked in pigeon holes. He was shown several idols of venerable Gurus and incarnate Lamas and one of the idols of that of Guru Rimpoche which is the Tibetan name of Guru Nanak. His Holiness, the incarnate Lama (Head Lama) told him that some writings of the great Guru were also in his personal possession.

After visiting the different areas of Nepal, the Guru left for Sikkim *v/a* Laltapatti crossing Telia river.

SIKKIM

From Nepal Guru Nanak entered the territory of Sikkim in A.D. 1514-15. He passed through the Tonglo mountain (called *Nanki* in Nepal) with a height of 9,300 feet. Mention may be made of the visit of Guru Nanak to Tumlong, a city of Sikkim. The Guru took rest on a mound in the forest near Tumlong. Mardana was asked to play upon the rebec and the Guru sang one of his hymns. The music had a great effect on the animals and the birds of the jungle. They gathered around the Guru. A passer-by noticed this strange phenomenon and narrated this scene to the people in the city. The people began to flock around the Guru. The king himself came to pay his respects to the Guru.

A legend is current in Sikkim about Guru Nanak. It is said that the king and his subjects requested the Guru to bless the country so that the cereals and cotton may grow in the country in abundance. According to the legend the Guru had brought his rice meal packed in banana leaves. Under the instructions of the Guru the rice was sprinkled in the field and banana packing was buried in a corner. It is because of the blessings of the Guru the valley harvests a rich crop of rice and bananas.

In Tibet, Sikkim is known as Den-jong or the rice country. Gangtok is the capital of Sikkim. There are about 500 villages in the territory. The hills present very beautiful scenery. They are of great interest for the students of Botany and Zoology because of the variety of the plants and species found there.

As we proceed upwards from Gangtok there are two valleys : Lachen and Lachung. Lachung valley takes us to the majestic pass between India and Tibet named Natu La. Lachen valley continues in northerly direction towards Pegong where Lachen Chu and Lachung Chu meet each other and move to fall in Tista river. This portion of the river trijunction has a great scenic beauty. It is about one mile long and half a mile wide, where the village Chung Thang is situated.

There is a mound of black rocks in Chung Thang which is about 30 feet high and about 300 feet in diameter. There are two big trees at the top of the mound and a spring at its base. It is said that the Guru rested on this mound. The visitors to this place have heard the people and the Lamas uttering the name of Nanak or "Rimpoche Nanak Guru".

The people inhabiting Sikkim are Lepchas, Bhutias and Paharias. The Lepchas are said to have migrated from the Assam hills and settled in Sikkim in the 13th century. Bhutias are of Tibetan origin and Paharias have migrated from Nepal. It is said that in A.D. 1641 the Lhasan Lama with the assistance of two other saints converted the people of Sikkim to Buddhism and appointed Penehoonamgyel to be the first king or Gyalpo.

Being just on the border of Tibet the hold of Buddhism on the people of Sikkim had remained consistent but the name Nanak still rings in the valleys of Sikkim. The people call him "Rimpoche Nanak Guru of Punjab". The Lamas in the Gumpa of Lachung still remember him with affection and faith. According to them the Guru went to Tibet by that route.

There are 44 monasteries in Sikkim out of which one of the principal monasteries is Rhumtek which is situated at a distance of eight miles from Gangtok. The head Lama resides

at this monastery. There is a framed picture of Guru Nanak in this monastery. The palace monastery at Gangtok also contains this picture. The pictures of the Guru are also kept in the Gompas at Lachen and Chung Thang.

BHUTAN

The Guru entered the territory of Bhutan from Sikkim. He went straight to the capital Trashi Cho Dzong, where the largest monastery of the country is situated. It is the residence of Dharma Raja.

The historical origin of Bhutan still lies in darkness. Some old manuscripts found in the Tibetan monasteries give us some idea about the times when Guru Nanak visited Bhutan. It is said that the Tibetan Lamas from Kampa came to this country and settled during the last about five centuries. They established monasteries. The larger monasteries and Dzongs (forts) including the monastery of Trashi Cho were founded about 1500. The year of Guru Nanak's visit is 1515-16. Punakha and Wargu Phodrang were founded and built in 1527 and 1578 respectively after the visit of the Guru.

About three and a half centuries back an influential Lama named Shepton la-Pha became the king of Bhutan and adopted the title of Dharma Raja. His successors, Doopgein Shepton, like him, included both the spiritual and temporal authorities but the next king exercised only the spiritual authority and appointed a minister, who was given the temporal power. This minister became known as Deb Raja. Thus the two supreme authorities of Dharma Raja and Deb Raja were instituted.

Most of the people of western Bhutan are Bhutias who are of Tibetan origin and most of the people of Eastern Bhutan are allied to the people of the Assam valley. The remaining

inhabitants are Paharias. The main religion of the people is Buddhism. It is said that Bhutan was converted to Buddhist faith in the eighth century A.D. by Guru Padma Sambhava, but it was Nawang Du-gom Dorji or Shabdung Nawang Namgyel who brought Bhutan under one ruling power and control in the second half of sixteenth century. He is supposed to have been born in 1534 A. D. If this date is considered correct, then there cannot be any possibility of his meeting with Guru Nanak who finished his journey in these parts in 1517 A.D. and who passed away in 1539 A. D. But the supposed year of birth of Shabdung Rimpoche may not be correct and the Guru Nanak might have met him at the monastery of Trashi Cho.

Bhutan is said to form part of Harvarsha Khand, one of the nine regions. The people of this region used to worship their ancestors, but the Guru prevented them from such a practice. The Head Lama of the Trashi Cho monastery benefitted from his company and translated several hymns of the Guru in his language.

From Trashi Cho Dzong the Guru is said to have entered the hills of Assam and visited the area of Darjeeling, Cooch Behar and Garo hills and then entered Bhutan again through Trashigong Dzong. Then he visited the other monasteries in Bhutan. It is said that he stayed for some time at a monastery in Askrode (it could not be traced and may be an old name). The Chroniclers have mentioned the installation of a picture of Nanak Tapa in this monastery which shows the Head Lama paying his obeissance to the Guru with folded hands.

Then for some time the Guru followed the course of Chinchu river (mentioned as Sampoo Nadi) and entered the territory of Tibet through the Chumalhari mountain.

TIBET AND CHINA

It was in 1514 that during his third journey in the Himalayas Guru Nanak made an incursion into Tibet. He was visiting the holy Kedar Kshetra. He travelled from Shipki pass in Himachal Pradesh to Lipu Lekh pass on the trijunction of Nepal, Tibet and India. The frontier travels through the passes of Tsangchok La, Mana, Niti and Tunjun La, on the northern borders of Uttarkashi in Uttar Pradesh. The Gangotri region and Kedar Kshetra are situated to the east of Shipki pass. Across this frontier lie the Mansarovar and Mount Kailash.

It is from the Gangotri region that the ancient passes lead pilgrims to the holy lake of Mansarovar and Mount Kailash. Indian caravans have passed through these passes to western Tibet from very early times. Guru Nanak entered these passes in 1514 and travelled with his companions for Mansarovar and Mount Kailash.

Mansarovar is the sacred lake situated at about twenty miles south of Mount Kailash. Towards its west, there is another lake called Rakas Tal. Mansarovar is round in shape and has a circumference of twenty-two miles. Its water is crystal clear. Rakas Tal is greater than Mansarovar. It is irregular in shape and its arms extend for miles.

Mount Kailash is the sacred mountain with a height of about twenty-two thousand feet. Guria Mandhata which lies to the south of Mansarovar is higher than Kailash, about twenty-six thousand feet. Hindus generally identify Mount

Kailash with Mount Meru or Sumeru. It is considered to be the abode of Shiva and Parvati. Therefore, it is a famous place for Hindu pilgrimage. Hindus and Buddhists both march along its circumference of about twenty-five miles. This journey is completed in about three days. At one point in its circumference there is a small sacred lake known as Gauri Kund, which remains frozen throughout the year.

Bhai Gurdas, the Sikh theologian, has made a mention of the visit of Guru Nanak to Mount Sumeru. According to him the Guru met here the famous 84 Siddhas and held discussions with them regarding the metaphysical and spiritual problems. The Guru admonished the Siddhas for their asceticism and carelessness about the problems of common man. The Siddhas wanted to bring the Guru to their fold. They thought that such a Yogi would be able to spread their cult throughout the world. They decided to test the Guru, therefore, they sent him to the lake for water. But there was no water in the lake. Instead it was full of diamonds and pearls. For the Guru they were just stones. The Guru returned and informed the Siddhas, that there was no water. Then there was lot of discussion and argumentation. Ultimately the Siddhas bowed down.

The Sumeru mentioned by Bhai Gurdas is, in fact, Mount Kailash and the eighty four Siddhas, who had left the world since long could not be there; their followers and disciples living in the vicinity of Kailash must have held the discussions with the Guru. The Tal or lake where the Guru was sent to bring water was in all probability Gauri Kund, which lies frozen throughout the year.

With the defeat of the Siddhas before the Guru, the seniority and authority of the Guru was established. His fame spread in Tibetan Plateau, because the pilgrims to Mansarovar carried

the news of the victory of the new Guru or Rimpoche. He was held in high esteem and after he had left Tibet, the legends began to grow around the personality of this new Guru.

Buddhism was the main religion of Tibet. It had been declared the state religion in the later half of the eighth century. There was a development of Buddhism in India in the tenth century A.D. The Tantrik phase of Buddhism developed in northern India, Kashmir and Nepal into the polydemonist doctrine incorporating the mantrayana practices. It was known as Vajrayana or the 'Thunderbolt Vehicle'. This form of Buddhism became prevalent in Tibet also. It became known as 'Lamaism' after its priests. Along with Vajrayana it incorporated Tibetan mythology and spirit-worship, but the loftier principles have also been preserved.

The Lamas of Tibet show great respect for the Gurus besides Buddhas and Devas. Guru Padma Sambhava is held in highest esteem. He is deified. There are other Gurus who receive great reverence and among them Guru Nanak or Guru Rampoche of Amritsar receives great veneration. Several times Lamas have been seen carrying small idols of Guru Nanak besides the idols of other Gurus and deities.

The most significant mantra of the Lamas is "Om Mani Padma Hum" which literally means: "Om, the Jewel in the Lotus". It contains six syllables which close the doors of re-birth in the six realms. It is a thanks giving to all-compassionate Bodhisattva. This mantra is repeated along with the revolutions of the prayer-wheel.

The spell for Guru Padma Sambhava is "Om Vajra Guru Padma Sidhi Hum" and this spell has been prevalent for centuries after the establishment of Lamaism by Guru Padma Sambhava. The same mantra is said to have been used as a

spell of Guru Nanak which is spoken as "Om, Bhadra Guru Padma Sidhi Hum". The word 'Vajra' has been changed to 'Bhadra'. It might have been a deliberate change after the visit of Guru Nanak. The words "Bhadra Guru" (great Guru) are for Guru Nanak.

It is said that there are Gompas on all the four sides of Mansarovar in which the images and books of the Buddhist saints are preserved. The images in these Gompas include the image of Guru Nanak. The images of Guru Nanak are also worshipped reverently in the Tibetan Temples. When the Lamas are asked to give the identity of Bhadra Guru, they mention the Guru Rimpoche of Amritsar. They often pay visits to Rawalsar and Amritsar, where they revolve continuously their prayer-wheels reciting the mantra of Bhadra Guru. From the hill resorts of Hipka, Kanam, Puha etc. up to Garhtok, the route is covered after brief intervals and the picture of Guru Nanak appears on the ceiling of such covering. It is probable that after the victory of the Guru over the Kanphata Yogis, the Tibetan disciples of the Guru made the images and pictures of the Guru in order to perpetuate his memory in these parts.

After visiting the Mansarovar, Kailash and the neighbouring areas, the Guru returned to the Gangotri region through the passes mentioned above. It is said that the footprint of Guru Nanak is still preserved in Shapji, the only monastery on the bank of Rakas Tal.

After visiting the hilly areas of Uttar Pradesh, the Guru entered Nepal. From Nepal he moved into Sikkim and then into hilly areas of Bengal and finally Bhutan. From Bhutan he entered the Chumbi valley and once more set his foot in Tibet.

In olden times Tibet was known as *Chin*. *Chin-desh* is mentioned as lying to the south-east of Mansarovar and the country

in the direction is Tibet. According to Pargiter, China comprised the country of Tibet along the whole range of Himalayas. The people of Tibet whom Guru Nanak met have been named as *Al-la-Chin* or *Ahl-i-Chin* (the inhabitants of China) in the Janamsakhi Bhai Bala. They were put on the right path by the Guru. The inhabitants of Singhpura raised a temple in the memory of the visit of the Guru (called Nanak Phungi). These people used to worship the dead, but the Guru forbade them from such a practice.

The Guru proceeded to Lhasa and passed by Palti Lake. At Lhasa, Potala, the seat of the Dalai Lama is situated and it is here that the Guru held discussions with the Chief Lama who is the spiritual head of the Tibetan people. Very little is known about the Guru's itinerary in this part of the country. Much is shrouded in darkness and needs research. The impact of Guru Nanak in Tibet, his images and pictures in the monasteries say much about the Guru's dynamism and popularity, but something about his journeys may be found in the hidden treasures of the monasteries.

It is said that on the track leading to Khora La and on the outskirts of Payako Chin village, there is a stone with inscription in a non-Tibetan script probably Gurmukhi or Devanagari. This inscription is said to give details of the Guru's journey in the area.

Nothing is known about the Guru's visit to China or *Mahāchīn*. The *Mahāchīn* country is said to have extended from Mount Kailash to Mongolia. In this vast country, the Guru seems to have travelled a lot, if we consider as correct the derivation of the name of Nanking city after the name of the Guru. It has been said that in their address of welcome to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1951-52, the Chinese claimed that because of the great reverence shown by the people of

China to the great Indian saint Guru Nanak, they had named one of their prominent cities (i.e. Nanking) after his name.

There is another city in China of a similar name, i.e. Nankiang. It may have the same source. After visiting the major portion of China, the Guru returned to India *via* Sinkiang state. His visit must have left a deep impress on the followers of Confucious, Tao and Buddha.

KASHMIR

It was about 1517 when Guru Nanak entered Kashmir from Sinkiang province of China. In China, he is said to have gone as far as Nanking and it was his return journey. He came through the last Indian outpost named Shahidullah. A trade route between India and Sinkiang ran through Ladakh, to the other side of the Kuenlun mountains. The Indian caravans used to move along this route to Sinkiang. The journey was taken during the summer months.

While going from Leh, the main centre of eastern Ladakh, the caravans moved through Tankse, and encamped at Pamzal. From Pamzal there were two routes, which took the caravans to Shahidullah. The one passed through Chang-Chenmo valley, Nischu, Lingzi-Tang, Lake Tsung, Thaldat, Khitai pass, Haji-Langar and Qaraqash valley, the other led through Shamal Lungpa, Samsung Ling, Dehra Gompa, Quila Jilga, Chung-Tash, Tagh-Pass, Chibra-valley and Malik Shah.

Guru Nanak took one of these routes for Leh, the capital of Ladakh. Ladakh is a mountainous tract in the eastern part of the valley of Kashmir. It is the chief centre of the trade-routes between Tibet and western Asia, Zarkund, and India. It is situated between the Himalaya and the Kuenlun mountains and also between Baltistan and Chinese Tibet. Buddhism is the main religion of the people. The Hemis monastery is the famous one and is situated 24 miles from Leh.

The history of Ladakh is closely connected with Tibet

because before the Dogra-rule its major portion had been under the Tibetan kings. Its capital Leh is one of the highest places in India.

There is a legend concerning the visit of Guru Nanak in this part of Kashmir. One particular spot which commemorates the visit of the Guru is situated about twenty-four kilometres from Leh on Leh-Kargil road. There is a rock on the road side about eight feet high and eight feet in diameter. It has a cavity which appears to have the impression of a head, shoulders and upper part of the body of a man. It is said that a demon tried to frighten the companions of Guru Nanak. He was requested by them to give them protection from the demon. The Guru is said to have pushed him against the rock and he was stuck into it.

From the above-mentioned spot, the Guru proceeded towards Leh where he rested under a tree, which is treated as sacred by the people of the area. About forty miles from Sri Nagar on Ladakh side, there is a village named Bandipur which was visited by the Guru. A Gurdwara exists there in his memory.

After Ladakh, the Guru is said to have visited Baltistan, another important area of the Kashmir state. The religion of the people of this area is also Buddhism like Ladakh. This is a tract of high mountains and valleys and river Indus flows through it. The chief town of Baltistan is Skardu. The Guru visited this town and rested near the fort. This place is considered sacred by the people of the area.

From Baltistan the Guru moved into proper Kashmir valley and went to Sri Nagar, the capital of Kashmir. It is one of the most beautiful cities of the world and has been called the Venice of the East. It extends for about four miles

on both the banks of river Jhelum. Guru Nanak visited the prominent land-mark of Sri Nagar that is the temple of Shankracharya. This temple is situated on the summit of Shankracharya hill. It is dedicated to god Shiva. There is another famous temple of Sri Nagar known as Raghunath temple; this is the biggest temple of Hindus in Sri Nagar. The old Sanskrit schools were situated in the big halls of this temple. It is probable that the Guru visited this temple also and held discussions with the Shaiva divines of the period. The Muslim rule began in Kashmir valley about the fourteenth century. During the last decade of this century and the first decade of fifteenth century, the then Muslim ruler named Sikandar perpetrated great atrocities on his Hindu subjects. He took delight in breaking the sacred images. This gave a great blow to the Hindu culture of the state.

When Guru Nanak visited the valley, the power of the ruling dynasty had begun to decline. Shaivism was the main religion of the Hindus. Lalla the prophetess of Kashmir and a great saint of Kashmir Shaivism had left a great impression on the Kashmiris during her lifetime in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. The Guru had met these Shaivites at the temple of Shankracharya.

The Guru is also said to have visited Harmukh Ganga on the Baramula side of Jhelum. At a distance of about seven miles from Baramula Guru Nanak is said to have sat under a chinar tree, which is held sacred in his memory. From Sri Nagar the Guru is said to have proceeded to Amarnath via Pahalgam. Pahalgam is a splendid summer resort of Kashmiris in the heart of Lidder Valley. Before reaching Pahalgam the Guru met a Sanskrit scholar named Brahm Das at Matan near the ruins of Martand Temple. He had with him a heap of books and an idol hung around his neck.

A great discussion is said to have followed this meeting and ultimately the Pandit bowed before the divine knowledge of the Guru. He became a devotee of the Guru. On his insistence the Guru stayed at his residence at Bīj Bihārā nearby for a few days. There is a Gurdwara at Matan commemorating the visit of the Guru. This Gurdwara forms part of the holy shrine of the Hindus. There is a huge spring at the foot of a hill, the water of which passes through two tanks.

After visiting the Amar Nath shrine where he met several Shaivite Sadhus, the Guru left for Jammu state through Pir Panjal and Banihal where he visited Kishtwar, Bhadarwah and Thāthārī. The shrines have been built at these places in his memory. The Guru is said to have visited the shrine of Vaishno Devi in a cave known as "Garbh Yoni". This holy place is situated near Katrā. Then the Guru came to Jammu which lies on the banks of Tawi. After visiting Jammu, the Guru went to Purmandal which is at a distance of about fifteen miles from Jammu. A fair was being held here. There is a statue of she-jackal near the wall of the shrine. It is said that the queen of the ruler had been transformed into a she-jackal. The Guru is said to have touched it with his foot and the soul of the queen obtained release. After this the Guru returned to his home town *via* Sujan Pur, Pathankot and Gurdaspur.

It is probable that the Guru visited several other Shaivite temples in the Jammu and Kashmir State and held discussions with the chief priests.

IV
THE FOURTH JOURNEY

SIND AND BALUCHISTAN

While returning home during his second journey, the Guru entered Sind from Gujarat. After leaving Lakhpat in Gujarat, he travelled along East Nara river and passed through Ali Bandar, Naukot and Umarkot. Then he travelled through Khairpur and Upper Sind Territory and entered the area of Bahawalpur state wherein he touched Khanpur, Ahmedpur, Uch and the old site of Bahawalpur. Uch is known as Uch Sharif. The Guru met the Muslim Saints at Uch. The chief Muslim divine is called *Gaddi-nishin Makhdum Sahib*. In the Toshakhana of Makhdum Sahib, five relics of the Guru have still been preserved, which are (i) a pair of wooden sandals (*Kharāwān*), (ii) A T-shaped wooden stick, called Bairagan, (iii) A stone gurb, (iv) Two stone bangles; and (v) a wooden boat about 1½ feet long and one foot wide. The pirs of Uch Sharif wear long hair, beard and turban. The hair on their head are let loose on their back.

At Uch the Guru is said to have held discussions with Pir Sayyad Ahmed Hassan and Pir Jalal-ud-Din, who bowed before the spiritual greatness of the Guru. There is a story about the boat which is preserved in the *Toshakhana*. It is said that the Guru, Pir Baha-ud-Din of Multan, Makhdum of Uch and Mast Qalandar crossed the river sitting on the four corners of the boat.

When the Guru went to Mecca, he was requested to leave his wooden sandals, so that they could be preserved in the memory of his visit. It is said that Pir Jalal-ud-Din of Uch was also at Mecca at that time and brought the sandals to Uch, where they are preserved up to this day.

Most of the area of Sind was covered by the Guru during his fourth journey when he visited the Middle East. After visiting Dera Ismail Khan in N.W.F.P. and Dera Ghazi Khan, Jampur, Fazilpur, Sitpur, Rajanpur and Mithankot etc. in the Punjab, the Guru entered the area of Bahawalpur state and reached Naushara after crossing the river. It is said that Mardana, who had seen several pirs expressed in a vein of humour his desire to become a pir. The Guru manifested the greatness of Mardana to the people of Fazilpur, Miranpur and Naushara so that they became his disciples. It is recorded that the descendants of these people still hold the descendants of Bhai Mardana in great reverence.

Then the Guru is said to have visited Sohana on river bank before reaching Sukkur. There is a Sikh temple in the memory of the Guru here. At Sukkur the Guru rested in an islet in river Sind under a banyan tree. The islet is known as Sādh Bela and also falls near Bhakkar and Rohri. The Guru is said to have met here Varuṇa, the god of water. The place where the Guru sat has never been damaged by the flood waters till this day. God Varuṇa is known as Khwaja Khidar by the Muslims. The priests of the shrine of Khwaja came to hold discussions with the Guru, but seeing his spiritual greatness, they bowed and departed. The Sikh temple exists in Sādh Bela, Sukkur. Then the Guru went to Shikarpur, where there is a Dharamsala in the memory of the visit of the Guru. Continuing his journey, the Guru passed through Ruk, Kambar and Larkana and then crossed the river and reached Halani Bulani where there is a memorial in honour of the visit of the Guru. Then the Guru passed through Ranipur, Morangjhera and other wayside towns and reached Udero Lal, where the people worshipped a saint of that name and also water. The Guru left a deep impression on these people, who, it is said, do not consider any distinction between Udero Lal and Guru Nanak and visit Amritsar with profound reverence.

Continuing his journey, the Guru passed through Motiari and Tanda Alahyar Khan and crossed the river from the site of present Hyderabad and reached Kotri. From Kotri, he proceeded to *Tatta* (there is a Dharamsala of the Guru near Raj Ghat) from whence he visited the present site of Karachi port, where a Sikh temple was erected in memory of his visit later on. From Karachi, the Guru travelled on the seaside up to Hinglaj in Makran passing through Sonmiani and Liari. The *Gosāin Sādhus* of Sonmiani hold the Nanak panthis in great reverence, because they confess that their elders were defeated by the Guru in religious discussion. At Hinglaj, there is also a Sikh temple near the temple of the goddess, which was raised in honour of the visit of the Guru. It is probable that Guru visited the area surrounding Hinglaj and some other portions of Baluchistan. The Guru is said to have visited Qalat and Quetta. There is a spring at Qalat known as Pir Hindu spring. At Quetta he stayed at the site of the Gurdwara of Sant Shankar Bharati. From Hinglaj, the Guru seems to have returned the same way up to Tatta from whence he entered Gujarat. The opinion is divided as to the port from whence the Guru embarked a ship on his journey to Aden and Middle East. Some say he boarded from Dwarka and others hold that he began his sea-journey from Surat. Most probably, it was Surat, from where he left for Aden.

ADEN

Aden is called the 'Gibraltar of the East'. It has an area of 75 square miles. Before the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century, Aden was a port of considerable importance. It was a trading centre and the chief market for the shipment of Asiatic goods to the West. The Portuguese first rounded the cape of Good Hope in 1497-98 and at that time this port of commercial importance acted as a rendezvous for ships going to India. It also enjoyed active local trade with the coast of East Africa and Persian Gulf.

Aden remained under the Suzerainty of Turks till 1630 and when Guru Nanak visited this port in 1517, on his way to Mecca, the Muslims were its rulers. He embarked from Surat in Gujarat along with his companions and landed here for a few days before re-embarking for Jadda. This town is strongly fortified and the Guru stayed near the fort on a hillside, at a distance of nearly half a mile from the town. On the site where the Guru stayed, a golden-pinnacled Sikh temple is said to have been erected and which can be seen by the passengers of an arriving ship.

We do not know exactly about the discussions which the Guru held with the people of the area and the Muslim divines. But this fact is beyond doubt that the Guru was clothed in the dress of a Haji, going on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is a part of the Arabian peninsula, the other parts being Yemen, Aden, the Hadhramaut, Oman, Kuwait and several other smaller territories. The whole peninsula continued to be restless till the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it came under the rule of Ottoman Sultans. But the control of these Sultans of Istanbul was not very strong even in the Hejaz area. The appearance of European Merchant adventurers in the area at the time was a significant event. The Portuguese were the first to arrive in Indian ocean and the Persian Gulf.

Hejaz is a part of Saudi Arabia. Mecca, the holy city of Mohammedans is its capital with a population of about one and quarter lakh. The port of Jadda and the city of Madina are the two other significant places of Hejaz, each having a population of about thirty thousand. Our concern is with these three cities of Hejaz, because, they were visited by Guru Nanak.

Re-embarking on the ship at Aden, the Guru reached Jadda, where he landed along with his companions and other pilgrims. Like Aden, there is a Sikh shrine here also in honour of the visit of the Guru. It is situated towards the east of the Sepulchre of Mother Eve. The shrines in the Middle East commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak have been erected in the style of Mosques and they are known as the house (makān) of Nanak Pir or Wali Hind.

From Jadda, the Guru proceeded towards Mecca. He was

accompanied by Sayyad Mohammad Ghaus of Sankhotra besides his lifelong companion Mardana and having been clothed as a *Haji*, he looked like a Muslim divine. Bhai Gurdas, the great Sikh theologian, has mentioned the visit of the Guru to Mecca in his first Vār in the following manner :

“Then the Guru went to Mecca wearing blue garments. He had a staff in his hand, the book (*Quran*) in his armpit and carried *Kūzā* (cup) for ablution and a prayer-mat. He went and sat in the mosque, where the pilgrims (*Hājis*) were busy in performing ceremonies for *hajj* (pilgrimage). When the night fell, the Guru (*Bābā*) went to sleep with his feet towards *Mihṛāb* (niche in the centre of the wall facing Mecca). Jiwan (the keeper) hit him with his leg and asked him who he was and why he had committed the act of infidelity; why he committed the sin of stretching his legs towards (the house of) God ? He caught hold of his legs and dragged him, but Mecca revolved exhibiting his (Guru's) power. All were amazed and bowed before him”. (Pauri 32)

“Then the *Qadis* and *Mullas* gathered together and began to discuss the matters of Faith. A significant play was enacted and nobody could comprehend its nature. They opened the book (*Quran*) and asked him as to who was superior, a Hindu or a Muslim. The Guru told the *Hājis* that without good action both would weep and both of them would not get a place of honour in the court of the Lord; their guise will disappear like the washing away of Kasumbha colour with water. They are jealous of each other, where should their *Rāma* or *Rahīm* stand ? The world has followed the ways of Satan.” (Pauri 33)

“The Guru left his wooden sandal as a sign (of his visit). It was worshipped in Mecca...”

It is said that Maulvi Mohammad Hassan, Qazi Rukn-ud-Din, Imam Jafar and Pir Abdul Bahaw discussed the religious doctrines with the Guru. The questions of these prominent Muslims and the answers of the Guru have been preserved in the poetic dialogue named "*Makke Madine di Goshta*".

About one and a half mile from Kāba towards the north, on the road towards Hamra, near the mosque of Baba Farid, stands the mosque of Nanak Pir Wali Hind. There is also one *Baoli* of the Guru and a *Ber* tree.

Mecca is the most sacred city of the Muslims, because the prophet Mohammad was born here and the most important shrine Kāba is situated in this city. The Guru stayed at Mecca for some days and then left for Madina, the city where the prophet passed away and where he was buried. From the point of view of sanctity, it is second to Mecca.

While Mecca lies in a rocky valley, Madina is favoured by nature. In striking contrast to Mecca, where there is a great scarcity of water, the noteworthy feature of Madina is its richness in water. The news of Guru Nanak's discussions at Mecca had reached Madina, before his arrival there. When the Guru reached Madina, he asked Mardana to play upon his rebec and he sang one of his hymns. Music is generally considered by Mohammadans to be contrary to the teachings of the prophet, therefore, the rebec player and the singer were held sinful. The people of Madina came forward to stone both Guru Nanak and Mardana to death. It is said that the stones stuck with the hands of Muslims and they could not fulfil their objective. They, instead, bowed before the Guru. At the intervention of Imam Jafar, the descendant of Hazrat Ali, the stones fell down from their hands. In reality, the music had a great impact on the minds of the people. They were pacified by its soothing effect.

At Madina, religious discussions were held with the Guru by Imam Ghaus, Imam Ashraf and Imam Azim, who ultimately bowed before the Guru with great veneration. A house of Nanak Pir or Wali Hind exists at Madina at a distance of about three miles from the burial place of the Prophet.

From Madina, the Guru went to Baghdad, passing through several towns of Saudi Arabia and Sahra of Hijarah in Iraq. It may be mentioned here that at the time of the visit of Guru Nanak to Mecca, several Indian Muslim divines had also gone on a pilgrimage to Mecca, the important of them were Makhdum Rukn-ud-Din, Jalal of Uch, Sheikh Ibrahim (Farid) of Pakpattan and Sheikh Dastgir. In the discussions which are preserved in "*Makke Madine di Goshta*", Makhdum Rukn-ud-Din took a leading part.

IRAQ

In the state of Iraq, the old Babylonian civilization flourished in the wide plain between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. The great cities like Babylon and Ninevah rose to eminence and faded away in this area. Several battles were fought here. The Greek, Persian and Turk conquered it in different periods. In the period 1499-1508 A.D., the Shi'i Safavid Ismail became the Shah of Persia and also conquered Iraq. This was a great menace for the Ottoman Sultan because he was a Sunni, i.e., an orthodox Muslim. Therefore, Selim I waged a war against Shah Ismail in 1514 and thereby began a conflict spread over a long period. Sultan Solyman, during this conflict, conquered Baghdad in 1534-35.

Guru Nanak reached Baghdad in about 1518 A. D. Baghdad had been a great city of Arab art and culture under the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid. It is situated on the banks of swift tawny Tigris. In the time of Guru Nanak, it was a great centre of Islam, next in importance to Mecca and Madina. At Baghdad, the Guru stayed in front of the mosque of Baba Farid. His sweet music attracted the people, many of whom had heard about the coming of Nanak Pir in Mecca and Madina. Pir Abdul Qadir and Pir Bahawal began to visit the Guru and used to discuss the religious doctrines. The Caliph of Baghdad also heard about the arrival of the Guru and came to see him. It is said that the Guru began to collect the pebbles. The Caliph bowed before him and asked the reason for his action. The Guru said that he wanted a bed of these pebbles in the next world for austerities. The

Caliph was perplexed how could the pebbles go in the next world ? The Guru told him if his pebbles could not go with him, how could the wealth amassed by the Caliph with force and cruelty could go with the Caliph ? At this, the truth dawned upon the Caliph and he gave away his wealth to the deserving and needy. The advice given by the Guru to the Caliph given at this juncture is contained in *Nesihat Nāmā*.

It said that the wife of the Caliph had no son ; she, accompanied by the Caliph and with deep devotion, requested the Guru for this boon, which was granted. When the Guru departed from Baghdad after a stay of four months, a *Chola* (cloak) was presented to him on which the verses of holy *Quran* were embroidered. This cloak is still preserved in Dera Baba Nanak.

Bhai Gurdas has described the visit of Guru Nanak in Baghdad in the following manner :

“The Guru went to Baghdad and stayed outside the town. The God-like Guru had the rebec-player Mardana as his companion. He gave the ‘Azān’ (announcement) during his prayer and the whole world was stunned. The town was stunned and when the pir realized this, he was amazed. He saw in his meditation a great faqir in ecstasy. The *Pir* (known as *Dastgir*) came around and asked him who he was and to which house he belonged ? (The Faqir replied) that he was Nanak who had come to the world in Kaliyuga and who had rejected all others except ONE (God) whom he knew (as the power) pervading on earth, on sky and all the four directions, (Var I Pauri 35).”

“The Pir insisted on asking about the Guru and knew that this Faqir was a man of great devotion ; who had shown a miracle in Baghdad; who had announced his final research of lakhs

of skies and nether-worlds. Dastgir repeated (his request) before the Guru for exhibiting whatever he had attained. The Guru took the son of the Pir with him and closed his eyes and flew into the air. He showed lakhs of the skies and nether-worlds in the twinkling of an eye. From one of the nether-worlds he filled his bowl with *Prasad* (distributed offerings). He revealed his hidden powers. (Vār I, Pāuri 36)".

"All bowed before the Guru : Garh Baghdad, Mecca and Medina..... ." (Vār I, Pāuri 37).

Thus the Guru practically showed to the *Sajjada nishin* of the Muslim Shrine at Baghdad named Peer Dastgir Abdul Qadar Jilani that the creation of the Infinite cannot be delimited.

In his book entitled "Snowbirds", Swami Anandacharya has recorded in the following words the inscription dated 912 Hijri seen by him in the outskirts of Baghdad :

"Here Spake the Hindu Guru Nanak to Faqir Bahlol ; and for these sixty winters, since the Guru left Iran, the soul of Bahlol has rested on the Master's word, like a bee poised on a dawn-lit honey-rose."

The original inscription was in Arabic. Faqir Bahlol mentioned in the inscription might have been a descendant of the famous Bahlol Dana. The place where the Guru held his discourses with Bahlol lies to the west of Baghdad and between the old graveyard to the north and the present Baghdad—Samra railway line to the south. In this memorial there is an inscription in the old Turkish language, the translation of which is as follows :

"Murad saw the demolished building of Hazrat Rab-i-Majid, Baba Nanak, Faqir Aulia, and rebuilt it with his own hands, so that historic memorial may continue from generation

to generation, and his *murīd-i-sāeed* (the blessed disciple) may obtain heavenly bliss-year 917 H."

The year 917 Hijri corresponds with 1511-12 A. D. which seems to have been wrongly scribed. The date may be 927 H. which corresponds with 1521-22 A. D. At that time the memorial seems to have been erected. Even today, there are several disciples of Guru Nanak in Iraq. These people live on the banks of Tigris river, particularly in the cities of Al Kut and Baghdad. They are called 'Sobi' and generally they are gold-smiths by occupation. They are experts in their trade. They keep long hair and do not cut their beards and remember the Guru by names of "Baba Nanak" or "Baba Nana". It is probable that the Guru travelled extensively on the banks of Tigris and Euphrates, but nothing definite is known except his visit to Baghdad.

PALESTINE

From Iraq the Guru passed through Jordan and entered Palestine. In the time of Guru Nanak, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Jordan was included in the Ottoman *Vilayat* of Damascus and remained in a condition of stagnation till the First Great War. The Ottoman Turks also conquered Syria, Palestine and Egypt in the sixteenth century from the Mamlukes. Palestine had fallen under the control of Mamluk dynasty in Cairo in the thirteenth century. They had conquered it from the Christians, who had re-occupied it during the twelfth century.

At present, the state of Israel has been carved by Jews in Palestine. This land is a holy land and a place of pilgrimage for Mohammedans, Jews and Christians alike. The ancient city of Jerusalem is at present divided into two parts : the old city is in the kingdom of Jordan and the New City is the capital of Israel. The old city is the most sacred city of Christians and Jews and one of the sacred cities of Islam. Omar's Dome of the Rak is the site where the sacrifice of Isaac took place and from this very site, the Prophet is said to have ascended to heaven. The sacred shrine of the Christians is the toppling Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

At Jerusalem the Guru met the religious leaders of Judaism and Christianity and held discussions with them. No memorial of the Guru, however, has been preserved at this place.

AFRICA

(Egypt, Sudan and Abyssinia)

From Jerusalem in Palestine, the Guru proceeded towards Egypt. Passing through the desert of Tih, he went to Cairo, the capital of Egypt. This city is situated on the bank of Nile. The Nile valley covers a very small area of Egypt; it is fertile and populous. This valley is made fertile by the floods in the Nile in spring and early summer months every year, caused by the water sent down by the mountains of Abyssinia and Central Africa. Egypt had had its own great civilization. The canal, Pyramid and Sphinx are considered three symbols of old Egypt.

For some time Egypt remained under Greek Empire and accepted Christianity with the rest of the Empire. After that it came under the rule of Mohammedans. In about the middle of the thirteenth century, the Mamlukes dethroned Malak Sala and made Ibeg, the Sultan of Egypt (A.D. 1254). After this, Egypt was ruled by the Mamlukes for one hundred and thirty years. It was by the end of the fourteenth century that the power of the Turkish Mamlukes declined and the circassian Mamlukes came into power and made their own leader the Sultan of Egypt. During the fifteenth century, there was anarchy in Egypt. When Guru Nanak reached Egypt, it had already been conquered by the Ottoman Turks (in A.D. 1517).

It has been learnt that a platform of Nanak Wali still exists in honour of the visit of the Guru in the Suburban area

of Cairo. This information has been gathered from persons serving in the British army during the I Great War. In Sikh chronicles, the city visited by Guru Nanak is mentioned as Kai-kai which is said to be modern Cairo. But Giani Gian Singh has written that the Sikh soldiers who took part in Soudan expedition against Mehdi in 1886, actually saw platform, towards the south of the town of Kaikai, which was stated to be the place where the Master had met the Sultan and that the Sikh soldiers held congregation and sacrament there.

Since the Guru is said to have visited *Habash Valayat* or *Habash Dasha* which corresponds to Abyssinia, it is probable that the Guru travelled to that country on the banks of Nile and passed through Sudan also. Sudan or Soudan also means the country of the blacks. Abyssinia is also the country of the blacks. Since no record is available, we are not definite about the places visited by the Guru in Sudan and Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

When the Guru went to *Habash Valayat*, he was subjected to severe persecutions. The king was anti-Hindu. He used to kill the Hindus, when they penetrated into his territory. It is said that a wonderful cloak descended from heaven, on which the verses from scriptures were deciphered in different languages. The Guru wore this cloak and the king wanted to own it. The servants of the king tried very hard, but could not separate it from the body of the Guru. The Guru was thrown into the river Nile, but he could not be drowned. A great fire was lit and he was thrown into it, but he could not be burnt. Then the king got him buried under a big heap of stones, but he could not be crushed. Then it dawned upon the king that the Guru was not an ordinary mortal. He was either God Himself or His messenger, therefore, he came and bowed before the Guru requesting him for the forgiveness of his past sins and actions.

The Guru forgave him but instructed him to be cautious in future and not injure any body. He was advised to be just and munificent. The king promised to abide by the discipline.

The above description is recorded in Sikh chronicles about the visit of the Guru in the country of the blacks.

The Guru then seems to have proceeded further on the banks of the white Nile and entered Uganda. The Uganda Protectorate is surrounded by Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Tanganyika territory, the Belgian Congo and Kenya. It is partly governed by native chiefs and kings under the British supervision. Kampala is its chief town and a commercial centre. It includes the course of Nile from Lake Victoria to Nimule. Guru Nanak entered Uganda territory from Sudan. It is understood that at a distance of about 12 miles from Tabora Station, there is a memorial in honour of the visit of Guru Nanak in the hilly forests. At a distance of about twenty-four miles from Kampala, there is a village named Bab Nanika after the name of the Guru where a spring commemorates the visit of the Guru, which was the result of his blessings. It is said that there is no other spring in the vast area. The people mostly use river or lake water. The spring in the area reminds the people of the visit of the Guru, who is held in great respect by the inhabitants.

It is probable that the Guru visited the sea-coast of Kenya and also the Zanzibar island during this journey. He might have met the Sultan of Zanzibar. A further research can be made in this direction.

From Uganda, the Guru returned to Cairo in Egypt along the course of Nile and then left for Syria.

SYRIA

The Guru returned from Abyssinia, Sudan and Egypt and passing through the desert of Tih and the coastal parts of Palestine, he entered Syria (or *Shām Desha*). Syria had become part of Ottoman Empire in 1517 A.D. The first main city of Syria visited by the Guru was Esh Sham (Damascus). It is a desert city and is situated on River Barada. It is holy city for the Muslims. It is said that the general upheaval on the day of Judgment will not disturb Mount Kesyoren in Damascus. There are many memorials here of the age of Saladin and of the later Ottoman period. There is the Great Mosque which remained a Roman Temple during the Roman supremacy and which also served as a Christian basilica.

From Damascus, the Guru went to Halab (Aleppo). After Damascus, Aleppo is the largest town in Syria. The Guru asked Mardana to play upon the rebec and himself began to sing one of his hymns. The people tried to forbid the Guru from song and music, but he paid no attention to them. On a complaint, the religious leader Pir Mohi-ud-Din came at the site, but instead of saying anything to the Guru, he himself was elated into an ecstasy because of sweet music. When the ruler came to know this, he sent his preceptor Pir Abdul Rehman Rumi, who also went into an ecstasy. The ruler himself came and bowed before the great Saint.

It is said that there is a mosque here named mosque of Wali Hind near the mosque of Baba Farid.

TURKEY AND BEYOND TURKEY

From Syria, the Guru went to Turkey (*Rûm Desha*). It was 1519 A.D. and the Turkish Empire (or Ottoman Empire) had spread far and wide. The Ottoman Sultan at that time was Selim I. He was the first Sultan to assume the sacred title of Caliph, which was also borne by his successors. He waged wars against Persian kingdom and defeated the Tabriz ruler in 1514. He annexed the territories of Kurdistan, Mesopotamia, Diarbekr and other areas towards the east of Tigris. He defeated the ruler of Egypt and Syria in a bloody battle near Aleppo (Halab). Syria became part of Ottoman Empire in A.D. 1517 and in the same year Egypt was invaded and annexed.

Sultan Selim I, who ascended the throne in 1512 A.D., died in 1520. He was succeeded by his famous son Solymon the magnificent, who ruled for about forty-six years and under his reign, the Ottoman Empire reached its Zenith of glory. The Turkish rulers did not interfere in the religion of the defeated states. They did not impose their own religion on any country. The conquered races enjoyed their own political institutions. They were content with the levy of a tribute. Those who paid a tribute had the liberty of worship in their religious institutions.

The first major Turkish town visited by the Guru was Diarbekr (Diyarbakir). Then he passed through Sivas and other minor towns and ultimately reached Istanbul (Constantinople). We do not know definitely whether the Guru met the Turkish Sultan at Istanbul, but there is a probability of that meeting because the Guru had been meeting the rulers and the religious

leaders wherever he went. Sultan Selim I was not only a ruler, but he had also proclaimed himself Caliph after the subjugation of Mecca, Madina and Baghdad.

Istanbul is situated in Bosphorus and is the largest of the cities of Turkey and is its capital. One of the greatest Turkish rulers Mohammad II had conquered Serbia, Bosnia and Greece and had seized Constantinople. The conquest of Greek Empire by the Sultans of Turkey and the fall of Constantinople caused the flight of Greek scholars to Italy and other states. The New learning or Renaissance spread over the European states.

The visit of Guru Nanak to *Rûm Desha* has been mentioned in *Janamsakhis*. The existence of a Sikh temple in Istanbul (or Constantinople) is sufficient proof of the visit of the Guru. But we cannot think that in that period of Renaissance, the Guru did not go to Greece and Italy, if he visited the Turkish capital. Greece was a Turkish dominion. Every Greek town and village had to pay tribute according to its population. So long as the tribute was paid regularly, the inhabitants enjoyed religious freedom and political privileges. Since the access to Greece was not difficult, the country of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle could not be ignored by the Guru. He must have discussed with the scholars who did not leave Greece, the significance of various thoughts expressed by ancient philosophers. It is probable that he might have travelled by sea to Italy to meet the scholars who had left Greece due to the Turkish onslaught.

Various Sikh scholars have often expressed their opinion that the Guru who had visited all the prominent religious centres, could not ignore Vatican (Rome) in Italy, which is the seat of Pope or the Head of the Catholic Church. Therefore

his visit to Rome in Italy cannot be ruled out. This subject, however, requires further study and research, which I believe, will be inspired by the present work.

AZERBAIJAN

While returning from Turkey, the Guru entered the Russian territory of Azerbaijan. There are sixteen equal republics which form the Soviet Union viz. Soviet Russia, Ukraine, Byelo-Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Karelo-Finnish, Moldavia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The important oil industry is chiefly centered in Azerbaijan. The Aposheron Peninsula near the city of Baku, the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan, is famous for oil, at present. But otherwise its fame is quite old. In this area, near the town of Surakhany, the flames of fire arise from the clefts in the earth from unknown period. This place became sacred for the followers of Zoroaster, because they manifest deep devotion for fire-god. They are known as fire-worshippers. In the course of time the followers of Zoroaster were persecuted in Persia and they scattered away; most of them migrated to India.

The sacred flames of fire were not only visited by the Zoroastrians, but travellers from several countries went to enjoy the sight. There is a temple of fire-worshippers at the site. It was commonly believed that this temple was holy for the Zoroastrians and Hebrews, before the discovery made by the Russian orientologist Berezin. Mr. Berezin has narrated his visit to the site in the following manner :

“The light which grew stronger as we approached came fully into view when we ascended a hill. At first we could only see the chief veins of the fire and it was only where we

came nearer that we could see the other flames leaping from the earth. The fiery columns of all colours were wafted into fantastic shapes by the winds. In the glare we could indistinctly make out the proportions of the building inhabited by the Hindus, the flames streaming like banners from specially erected chimneys”.

Berezin found that all the inhabitants of the temple were Indians. There were also pilgrims from India. The inhabitants were mostly ascetics. There was a picture of goddess Kali. It appears that the inmates of this temple followed the same discipline as was followed by the inmates of Jawalamukhi temple in Himachal Pradesh. The Himachal temple was erected in honour of goddess Jawalamukhi, similarly the temple in Surakhany might have been erected in honour of goddess Kali. Guru Nanak seems to have visited this temple just as he visited the temple of Jawalamukhi. The rites of cremation were performed at Surakhany temple.

Several inscriptions were found on the temple walls. When these inscriptions were deciphered, it was found that there were some in Gurmukhi script and some in Devanagari script. The tablets in Gurmukhi contained the *Mul Mantra* (sacred formula) of *Japji*, the prominent work of Guru Nanak. The Devanagari inscriptions contained mention of Hindu gods and goddesses.

It is said that due to the increase in trade between India and the countries of Transcaucasus in the sixteenth century, many Indians came and visited this place. They raised structures on the sacred site and considered it a holy place associated with the gods. Several ascetics settled in the temple. When the place became famous, several pilgrims came to worship here, in the seventeenth, eighteenth and first half of 19th century. The flow of pilgrims declined in the second half

19th century. It is said that last major ceremony was performed in the temple in 1850 in the presence of Russian Tzar Alexander II. In the beginning of eighties, in the 19th century, the last Brahman left the temple.

Since Guru Nanak visited the Surakhany temple, some Udāsīs seem to have lived there and installed tablets there in honour of the visit of the Guru to that place. There may be some other memorials in the area but this is still to be investigated.

IRAN

From Azerbaijan republic of U.S.S.R., the Guru entered Persia (Iran). He came to Nazik from whence he reached Khvoy where he met a saint named Sharaj. It is said that the saint was highly impressed. He presented a gem to the Guru, but the Guru, in order to remove his ego, turned the whole mountain into a mountain of gems and precious stones. The saint bowed before the Guru. It is said that Wali Hind is still remembered at several places in the area. The matter needs further investigation. Then the Guru continued his journey and appears to have passed through Tabriz. The first important city visited by the Guru in Persia was Teheran. The ancient land of Persia lies between the Caspian sea and the Persian Gulf. It is the land of Omar Khayyam, the mystic poet and Ferdowsi, the writer of great epic 'Shahnama' (the Book of the kings). It remained under the subjugation of Baghdad Caliphs. The Seljuk Turks conquered it in the eleventh century. It was in 1502, that the Safavi dynasty, a truly Persian dynasty came to power. At this time, the Portuguese established a trading post at Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf. In 1514, Sultan Selim I of Turkey, defeated Shah Ismail of Persia at Tabriz but his death in 1520 enabled the king of Persia to retrieve his losses. It was in this period of turmoil that the Guru visited Teheran. It is said that the Guru met the ruler of Persia here. He might have met the Zoroastrian priests in this city.

From Teheran, the Guru is said to have gone to Isfahan, at a distance of about two hundred miles. It looks like an oasis in

the desert. From Isfahan, after covering a large area and visiting several towns, he reached Mashhad (Mashad) which is the capital of the Persian Province of Khurāsān. It is a great place of pilgrimage for Shi'is in Persia. It is probable that the Guru he'd discussions with the Sufis in Isfahan and with Shi'i Muslims in Mashhad.

From Mashhad, the Guru continued his journey and entered the Russian territory of Turkmenistan.

RUSSO-TURKESTAN

(Uzbekistan)

The Soviet central Asia or Turkestan contains five Soviet republics : Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan and Kirghizia. From Mashhad in Iran (Persia), the Guru proceeded towards Uzbekistan and passed through Turkmenistan. He seems to have travelled on the bank of Amu river and reached Urgench, *via* Khiva. The Syr Darya and Amu Darya flow from the Tien Shan and Pamir mountains. The country, through which they flow, is mostly dry and desert, but there are fertile upper valleys.

From Urgench, the Guru continued his journey and reached Bukhara. He stayed in the famous garden. Bukhara has remained capital of an Emirate for about seven and a half centuries. There has been a great deal of trade between India and Bukhara. The old Bukhara is preserved as a 'museum town'. This city of old Bukhara is companion to Samarkand, where the Guru went after his visit to Bukhara. Like Bukhara, modern Samarkand and old Samarkand are divided. Alexander the Great knew Samarkand as Marakanda. The contacts of India with Samarkand were not only commercial, but they were also cultural. There was an evolution of the composite Greco-Buddhist Gandhāra art, Bhagvata and Mahayana Buddhism through the contacts along the over-land routes in Gandhāra, Samarkand and Turkestan. This area was a Buddhist oasis and its important centres were Khotan, Kashgar, Fergana and Samarkand. The caravans used to stop and rest here. The visit

of Guru Nanak in this area was a further cultural link between India and Turkestan.

At Bukhara, there is a memorial of the Guru by the side of a spring which is said to have been dug out with his blessings. It is said that Mardana, the lifelong companion of the Guru felt thirsty and he went to drink water at the place where a faqir named Afzal Qādiri lived. The faqir refused. Then the Guru gave his staff to Bhai Bala, his other companion to go to the river-side at Vakand at a distance of about twelve miles and draw a line from the river to the city of Bukhara. It is said that the river followed Bhai Bala. The people relate this story. The water of the river now flows through the spring mentioned above.

There is a Dharamsala in memory of the Guru. It is said that the Sikhs installed the holy Granth in this Dharamsala in A.D. 1858. Up to Bukhara, several Sikh merchants are found, but beyond that there are very few.

The Guru is said to have visited Vakand at a distance of twelve miles from Bukhara. Pir Bahaw Din who belonged to this place, became his disciple. He was presented with a *chola* (shirt) and *Seli topi* (a woollen rope and a cap) and this special dress is worn up to this day by the faqirs of the school of Pir Bahaw Din. They recite *Japji* daily in their own tongue to which they call *Behr-i-Tawil* and think of Guru Nanak as their only religious preceptor. A spring commemorates the visit of the Guru to this place. Near the tomb of Pir Bahaw can be seen that tree, which grew from the staff of the Guru planted there. This tree bears pink and fragrant flowers.

Another town named Karmine was said to be visited by the Guru near the town of Vakand. The people of this place are only devoted to Guru Nanak Wali Hind and his discipline.

Then the Guru visited Karshi. The memorial of Nanak Qalandar is situated to the south of the town. The Guru continued his journey and reached Samarkand, the great cultural centre, as mentioned above. He is said to have held a discussion with the *qādis* of the city. From Samarkand, the Guru went to the town of Sabaz where the people thought more of fairies than anything else. According to the old legends, the fairies lived in this area and the giants on *Koh Kaaf* or *Kaaf* mountain. The Guru forbade the people of the area to believe in the old legends and put them on the path of devotion for the Lord. The people of this place still hold him in veneration and worship the *Asā* (staff) of Nanak Qalandar.

Then the Guru is said to have passed through Arguz, Kata Kurgan and other towns and reached the town of Panj Shamba. The people of this area thought only of heaven and *houris* and *gulphāms* (beautiful lads). The Guru forbade them from such a practice and put them on the path of devotion.

A village in the area named Narata was visited by the Guru. There is spring of the Guru at this place on a hill. The people remember the Guru mostly as "Pir Wali Hind"; some of them remember him as "Nanak Qalandar". The keepers of this memorial say that in A.D. 1826 the Emir of Bukhara attacked the Emir of Hissar (in Uzbekistan), he was defeated in the first battle, but when he prayed at the spring of Nanak Pir, he was successful in the next attempt.

Then the Guru proceeded further and visited the towns of Dzhizak, Ura Tyube, Kokand, Margelon, Fergana, Osh and Taskkent. It is said that in the area around Ura Tyube the Guru benefitted greatly the people with his religious instructions. Therefore they are disciples of the Guru and do not talk of any other preceptor except 'Wali Hind'.

After visiting the above-mentioned area in Russo-Turkestan, the Guru returned to Bukhara again. It is probable that he met the Emir of Bukhara here. From Bukhara he travelled southwards. Passing through the site of Shirabad, he crossed the boundary of Turkestan and entered Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan is a small country towards the northwest of India. Its northern area is mountainous, while a desert lies towards the south. There are fertile tracts also. It consists of ten provinces including Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Badakhshan. Badakhshan is also called Afghan Turkestan. Guru Nanak during his journey covered Mazar-i-Sharif, Band-i-Turkestan, Hazarajat, Kabul and Kafiristan. When Guru Naniak passed through Afghanistan, he met Babur at Kabul. Babur was the descendant of Tamerlane in the fifth generation. Before the Uzbek conquerors became rulers of Turkestan, Babur fled and conquered India in 1526. He founded an empire which included Afghanistan.

From Russo-Turkestan, the Guru reached Balkh (the modern Wazirabad). In Afghanistan, in the times of Guru Nanak, Balkh was also a great trading centre like Bukhara. Balkh is the ancient *Bahlīka* country bordering on Kamboja and situated to the east of Maha-Mlechha. There is an ancient fort in this city which is said to have been constructed by the great king Bali. Thus this city is associated with Hindu mythology. After having visited Balkh, the Guru continued his journey and reached Mazar-i-Sharif, where he met a Muslim divine Sayyed Rajab Shah. This faqir became a disciple of the Guru. The people of the city remember Guru Nanak as "Bālāg Dān". It is said that this Pir Bālāg Dān had filled a great pot with five handfuls of rice. The whole congregation ate from the pot, but the material was not finished. The material finished only when the Guru

left the place. At Mazar-i-Sharif the Guru stayed in a garden and held discussions with *Qazis* and *Mullas*.

From Mazar-i-Sharif the Guru continued his journey and reached Maimana which is famous as the city of fairies. Then he passed through Abdu and Kolam and halted at Khullam. He held discussion with the Muslim divine of the place named Pir Roshan Zamir. From Khullam, he moved further and passed through the pass of But Bāmiā and crossed Jamal river. Then he rested on a hill about two miles south of Kabul city where Babur resided at that time. The Guru rested in the garden and asked Mardana to play upon the rebec. He himself sang one of his hymns. The sweet voice of the Guru attracted the attention of Babur, who came to meet the Guru with presents of gems and rubies. The Guru said that he considered the ethical qualities as gems and rubies. Babur, then sought the blessings of the Guru regarding his conquest of India, whose rulers were unjust and officials cruel. The Guru is said to have advised him to follow the canons of truth and justice and as long as he and his descendants would apply these canons in their lives, they would be successful. There is a platform in the memory of the Guru in the garden, where he met Babur. It is also said that the Guru was arrested with other faqirs by the officers of Babur. He was ordered to grind corn along with others. His grindstones began to work automatically. Babur was informed about it. He came before the Guru with great humility. The Guru asked him to release other faqirs which was done. The upper grinding stone still lies in the Dharamsala of Bhai Shiam Singh and the lower one is in the Shahi Bagh.

Then the Guru entered the city of Kabul and stayed at the site of the present Sikh temple. Several people were benefitted by his company. He crossed Lunda river and passed through the *Tekri* of *Āsā Māi* and stayed on a hill named Ak Sarai which is

now famous for the Sikh temple and the spring. The people manifested great devotion for the Guru. When the Guru expressed his desire to leave, the people asked him as to when they would be able to meet him again. The Guru left a *Pothi* (the book) with them which has been preserved uptil now.

The Guru continued his journey and reached Gharuka hill, where lived a saint from Hissar whose name was Gharuka. The hill had been named after the name of the saint. It is at a distance of about 25 kos from Kabul. The saint had taken a vow of silence and had declared that any person who would make him speak, would be his religious preceptor. Several attempts were made, but the faqir did not speak. The Guru rested on the hill under a tree. He sang one of his hymns to the accompaniment of rebec. The faqir was attracted and began to speak. The Guru gave religious instructions to the faqir. When the time of his departure came, the faqir asked him when he would be able to meet him again. The Guru told him whenever he would remember him, he would come. The people asked how they would be able to know it. The Guru said that there would be an aerial music. It is said that the sand gathers in the form of a mount during the day and spreads out during the night. Early in the morning the noise of the horses' hoofs is heard. The music is also heard during the night. There is a Sikh temple at Gharuka in honour of the visit of the Guru.

Then the Guru is said to have travelled up to Farah and then he turned back and passed through Hazara territory where the people were greatly benefitted by his presence. The disciples of the Guru in the area are known as *Murid Nanaki*. It is said that because of the faith of the people, the impression of the *Panja* (five fingers and palm) of the Guru is seen on the *Prasad* (the material cooked for distribution).

From Hazara Highlands, the Guru is said to have gone to Naunagarhar highlands, where at a distance of four kos from village Sultanpur on Jalalabad road, there are three springs, one of the Guru, the other of Bhai Bala and the third of Bhai Mardana. There is a Sikh temple also. It is said that Mardana felt thirsty and the faqir named Abdul Ghaus living on the hill did not give him water. The Guru, then, blessed the area with three springs, which are a living memorial for the visit of the Guru. The Guru is remembered with great veneration in the area up to this day.

The Guru then visited the old cities of Kandahar and Ghazni before returning to Kabul again. At a distance of about fourteen kos from Kabul, there is a village, Iblis, where the Guru became a slave and was sold for three times. The villages where he worked as a slave are Lukman, Sultanpur and Iblis. He did this in order to teach a lesson to the people of the area. From Kabul he visited Kafiristan and from thence Chitral (now in Pakistan). Then before leaving the boundary of Afghanistan, the Guru visited Jalalabad, Besud, Lalpura, Dakka and then entered Khyber Pass for India.

NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (IN PAKISTAN)

The Guru left Afghanistan *via* Khyber Pass and reached Jimrud from whence he travelled to Peshawar. The place where the Guru stayed at Peshawar is known as Gorakh Hatri, where he is said to have held discussions with the yogis. There is a Dharamsala in honour of the visit of the Guru in Ganj Mohalla of Peshawar, which was later on visited by Baba Sri Chand, the elder son of the Guru.

From Peshawar the Guru went to Nowshera where there is a memorial in the Dharamsala of Bhai Hari Singh. Then he visited Hoti Mardan area. From there he proceeded towards Hazara district where he is said to have visited Balakot in Tehsil Mansehra along with Bhai Bala. Bhai Mardana had breathed his last at Khurram in Afghanistan. At Balakot there is a temple in the name of Bhai Bala. The name of the town itself is after the name of Bhai Bala. There is a spring in the memory of the visit of the Guru. Another spring is named "Chasma Bhai Mardana" which seems to have been named in his memory. The water of this spring has medicinal value and is considered a cure for leprosy.

Then the Guru followed the course of Lunda river and visited Nur Shehr and Khairabad. Then crossing river Attock (Sind), the Guru visited Hassan Abdal, where there is the famous shrine of Panja Sahib.

When the Guru had started on his fourth journey and passed through Sind, he is said to have touched some territory of the Frontier Province and visited some places including Dera Ismail Khan.

APPENDICES

I—LEGENDARY JOURNEY NO. 1

NAVKHAND OR NINE VARSHAS OF JAMBU DVĪPA

Bhai Gurdas, the great Sikh theologian, while writing about Guru Nanak in his first *Vār* has made a mention of the nine Varshas visited by him. These nine regions are parts of Jambu Dvīpa. The common list of these regions mentioned in the Puranas is as follows:

1. Bharata,
2. Kimpurusha,
3. Hari,
4. Ilavrita or Krauncha,
5. Ramyaka,
6. Haranmaya or Hairanyaka,
7. Kuru or Uttara Kuru or Airavata,
8. Bhadrasva or Bhava, and
9. Ketumala.

According to the Pauranic description Ilavrita Khand is the central region of Jambu Dvīpa and is flanked by Bhadrasva Khand on the right and Ketumala Khand on the left. The uppermost region is Uttara Kuru Khand and the lowest Bharata Khand. Hiranmaya Khand and Ramyaka Khand lie between Uttara Kuru and Ilavrita and Kimpurusha Khand and Hari Khand between Bharata Khand and Ilavrita.

The seven Kula-parvatas (mountain ranges) in Jambu

Dvīpa are Nīla, Sveta, Hemkuta, Himasana, Sringevane, Nishadha and Sumeru. Guru Nanak is supposed to have visited these ranges also. According to Bhagavata Purana, Jambu Dvīpa is 10,00,000 yojanas long and 1,00,000 yojanas broad and is shaped round like a lotus leaf.

In the larger edition of *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala, Nanak Prakash* of Bhai Santokh Singh and *Shri Guru Nanak Sūryodai* of Ganesha Singh Bedi, there is a description of the visit of Guru Nanak to all the nine regions.

Several experts of old and mediaeval geography have tried to locate these regions, but their findings are all conjectures. However, one fact emerges that Jambu dvīpa was the name given to Asia or major part of Asia, because Bharat or India formed a part of this vast dvīpa or island.

According to Sikh chronicles the first region of Jambu dvīpa visited by Guru Nanak was Ilavrita Khand. At one place in that region there were millions of lions. The Guru asked his companion Mardana to play upon the rebec. On hearing the sweet music, the hearts of lions were softened and they came near the Guru. The Guru asked them, "How have you come here?" They replied, "On seeing you, we have gained the power of speech. Our previous sins had brought us in this form. We have a feeling that you have come to us as a redeemer". The Guru asked them again, "On what food you live?" They replied, "We have eaten up all the animals of this forest which is spread over one hundred yojanas. If any one now amongst us feels drowsy, he is immediately eaten up by others, therefore we always stand without sleep. We beseech you to get our release from this state". The Guru said, "You will become human beings in your next birth but you will get the final emancipation only on following the instructions of the preceptor."

The Guru left the forest and came to the town and the people wondered how he and his companions escaped death because the lions were very fierce and they could spare none. They said, "We have built this town on the top of the mountain and have kept the cannons on all the points leading to the town for the fear of these lions. We do not understand how you have not been devoured by them". The Guru said, "I have made them non-violent. All of them will die after some time for want of food". All the inhabitants of the town felt very much pleased and became the disciples of the Great Guru.

After staying in *Ilavrita khand* for some time, the Guru went to *Haranmaya khand* where the earth was golden. The people practised yoga and remained young. Whenever a yogi felt that his end was approaching, he would climb a high mountain and die in the state of *Samadhi* (deep meditation). The people of the region gathered around the Guru who asked them, "Who is your Guru and what instructions do you follow?" The people said, "We are the disciples of Gorakh and under his instructions regulate our breath. Though we practise yoga, we do not attain the peace of mind. We want peace of mind" The Guru addressed them thus: "Remember the True Name of the Lord and end your ego. In this transitory world only *Atma* is real. Think of this reality and remember the Lord. In this way you will get the peace of mind". All the people became the disciples of the Guru. The Guru stayed here for some time.

The next region visited by the Guru was *Kimpurusha khand*, where he went to the main town. Dharam Chand, the king of that place, was virtuous and served the saints with great humility. He came to pay his homage to the Guru and enquired about his needs. The Guru put him to hard test. He transformed Bhai Bala into a lion and said to the king, "I do not need anything else except meat for this lion. But the lion eats nothing

else except a prince". The king remained firm and immediately presented his only son. The Guru was greatly pleased with the king and said, "Your mind is well-absorbed in the service of the saints. Now remember the Name of the Lord in the company of the saints and you will get final emancipation". The Guru stayed there for several days.

Then the Guru went to *Harivarsha Khand*. The king of that region came to pay his homage to the Guru with great humility. The Guru said, "Come under the discipline of the Guru and you will get whatever you want". The king replied, "I have no offspring. I shall gladly join your discipline, but kindly grant me this boon that I may have a son". The Guru gave him two cloves and one cardamom for the queen with the words, "you will have three children. Remember always the Name of the Lord and listen to His praises in the company of the saints. Cast away all the vices from your mind". The people of that region became the disciples of the Guru, who stayed there for some time.

The next region visited by the Guru was *Kuru Khand*. The people of that region used to weep when some one was born and would indulge in enjoyments if some one died. Mardana, the companion of the Guru, having been greatly perplexed at this conduct of the people, asked those who had gathered around the Guru, the reason of such a behaviour. The wise amongst them replied, "When one is born, he is separated from Ishvara. When he dies, he merges in Him. On birth one enters the region of the miseries and on death one gets peace on meeting the Lord. This is the reason why we weep at the birth of a person and celebrate his death" The Guru said, "It is very difficult to meet the Lord. There is no other path of meeting the Lord without the devotion in the company of the saints. When one

Joins such a company, he controls his mind and practises discipline. In this way his duality vanishes. He considers the whole world transitory and sees the Lord everywhere. If he does not follow the discipline, he experiences births and deaths again and again. When one is born, he is not separated from the Lord and when one dies, he does not merge in the Lord. It is only the discipline which ends transmigration. Therefore devote yourselves to the Lord whole-heartedly and remember His Name". The people of the region were highly impressed by the words of the Guru and became his disciples. The Guru stayed there for some days.

Then the Guru went to *Ketumala Khand* which was inhabited by the worshippers of Chandī (Shakti). The Guru sat on the highway through which the people passed in order to visit the temple. They took the animals for sacrifice and bowed before the image of the goddess for her boon. When the king with a big multitude passed that way, he saw the Guru and his companions. Finding the strangers, he asked his men to take one of them for sacrifice to the goddess. Bhai Bala was caught and driven like animals to the temple for sacrifice. The trumpets were sounded and there was great enjoyment. The Guru and Mardana followed the revellers. It is recorded in the chronicles that when Bhai Bala was offered as a sacrifice to the goddess, the image moved and Durga appeared in a fury. She snatched the sword from the hand of the executioner and sprang on the king. She cut off his head and his trunk fell on the earth. All the people fled away to save themselves. Only the Guru and his two companions were left there.

The Guru addressed the goddess, "The King was your disciple. He wanted to please you with the sacrifice of Bhai Bala. How is it that you have killed your own devotee?"

The goddess replied, "I always protect the devotees of the Lord. Whoever gives them trouble, I do not spare him. This evil king wanted to kill a saint, therefore, I killed the king and saved the saint". Saying this, the goddess disappeared.

Considering the Guru as a great saint, the people of the region led by the son of the king came forward to ask forgiveness from the Guru. They said, "Forgive our sins and make us your disciples." The Guru said, "Remember the Name of the Lord and love the saints". The people of the region became the disciple of the Guru, who stayed there for some days.

Then the Guru moved on to *Ramyak Khand*. Several people of the region came to meet the Guru. The Guru addressed them thus: "Remember the Name of the Lord day and night. Love the saints and remain in their service. Be a lion and not a dog. Be above pleasure and sorrow, comfort and misery. Devote the early hours of the morning in the remembrance of the Name of the Lord". The people requested the Guru to elucidate his instructions still further. The Guru said, "That person is like a dog who does not realise that the human body only experiences comfort and misery and it cannot understand the ways of Ishvara. The dog knows only quarreling and eating corpses. That person is a lion who knows that the human body is helpless and all the action is done by the Lord. The lion keeps in view the gunner and not the gun, similarly the good men think of the Lord and not the comforts and miseries which are given by Him. You will get the release, if you act like a lion. Control the mind, practise discipline and thus destroy the vices".

After staying for a few days in *Ramyak Khand*, the Guru went to *Bhadra Khand*. The king of the region came to meet the

Guru and questioned him thus : "Which one of the four ashramas is superior and why ?" The Guru said, "The Grihastya Ashrama (stage of householder) is the best of all the four *ashramas* because the adopters of all other ashramas take their birth in this ashrama. Just as the lotus takes its birth in the water and is brought up by it, similarly recognise *Grihastya* as the trunk of the tree of life and the other ashramas as its branches. *Grihastya* is like a sea and the other ashramas are created in it. The householder should spend his earnings not only upon himself but also give something in charity to people of his own and other *ashramas*. A householder is like the water of a well, which will remain pure, even if some of it is taken out. I have no words of praise for that householder, who devotes himself to the Lord and remembers His Name. If the fruit reaches maturity on the tree, it is very sweet, but when it is plucked and the maturity is brought about by external means, it is less sweet and may even become insipid." The king became a disciple of the Guru and began to follow his instructions. The Guru remained in that region for some time and then proceeded to *Bharata Khand* which was his own region where he was born

II—LEGENDARY JOURNEY NO. 2

SAPT DVĪPAS OR THE SEVEN ISLANDS

It is written in the larger version of *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala*, *Nanak Prakash* of Bhai Santokh Singh and *Guru Nanak Sūryodai* of Mahant Ganesha Singh that Guru Nanak visited all the seven dvīpas. The seven mentioned in the Puranas are as follows :

1. Jambu Dvīpa,
2. Plaksha Dvīpa,
3. Kusha Dvīpa,
4. Salmali Dvīpa,
5. Krauncha Dvīpa,
6. Shaka Dvīpa, and
7. Pushkara Dvīpa.

In the last chapter we have seen that Guru Nanak visited all the nine Varshas (Nav Khand) of Jambu Dvīpa.

In his book "The Geography of the Puranas", Shri S.M. Ali has tried to locate all the Dvīpas. His deductions are all suppositions. When we talk of the seven Dvīpas, the whole world is in view. The regions demarcated by Shri Ali do not cover the whole world. In all probability our world is divided into seven dvīpas. There might have been seven big islands in early ages which took the present shape in the course of ages. The seven dvīpas may correspond to Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia, north America, south America and Antarctica

Since Bharat Varsha or India is one of the regions of Jambu Dvīpa, it is thought probable that the old name of Asia was Jambu Dvīpa. If Guru Nanak travelled in all the Dvīpas, it means that he covered the whole world. But it could never have been possible in those days to go everywhere on foot. Other important questions also crop up : How the large oceans were crossed ? How the people of their countries were contacted without interpreters ? etc. There can be no answer to such questions unless we believe that the Guru used his tremendous spiritual powers for the welfare of mankind.

When Mardana, the companion of the Guru, expressed his desire to see all the seven dvīpas, the Guru said, "The great Jambu Dvīpa is spread over one lakh yojanas and lies in the middle of other dvīpas. The great mountain Sumeru lies within it. You have already seen the nine regions of this Dvīpa and one of these regions is Bharata Varsha. I cannot refuse to show you the other dvīpas, therefore, let us go". Then the Guru started on this great journey.

An ocean, one lakh yojanas in length, was crossed within a short period. The Guru reached Plaksha Dvīpa with his companions. This Dvīpa was named after white Plaksha (or Pakhar) tree which was found in abundance in this region. The word Plaksha in Sanskrit means white. The people in this region were white and lustrous and lived a comfortable life like gods. They lived up to one thousand years. This Dvīpa was divided into seven parts and there were seven rivers.

Several people of the dvīpa gathered round the Guru considering him a holy man from another dvīpa and presented the fruit of the area. The Guru asked them about the general conditions of life in their dvīpa. They said, "We have all the comforts of life, but there are three vices which create trouble.

Jealousy is created on seeing the superiors. Ego is created on seeing the inferiors and enmity on seeing the equals. If these vices are shed away, there will be bliss for ever. Kindly suggest some remedy for these ills”.

The Guru said, “There is light of God within everybody and there is none without Him. If you think in this way, the duality will cease. There will be no trouble. Remember the Name of the Lord. Join the holy congregation as brothers and pray”. The people of the dvīpa became his disciples.

After staying there for several days, the Guru proceeded to the next dvīpa after crossing the Plaksha dvīpa spread over two lakh *yojanas*. Then there was an ocean of sugarcane juice—two lakh *yojanas* in length which was crossed by the Guru and his companions. They remained dry throughout this journey. Then, they entered the next dvīpa, i.e., *Salmali dvīpa*. This dvīpa derived its name from Salmali (*Simmāl*) or Silk cotton tree.

The Guru visited a town in this dvīpa. The people and the king received him with great respect. The Guru initiated the king and his subjects into his discipline.

In the older version of *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala* we have a *Sakhi* about the visit of Guru Nanak in *Salmali dvīpa*, which is written as *Silmila dvīpa*. When the Guru started from Kavroo desha (Kamrup—Assam), he is said to have proceeded to *Silmila dvīpa*, where he met the king and stayed there for some time. We have discussed the whereabouts of this island in a separate chapter.

Then the Guru went to *Kusha dvīpa* which is named after Kush grass. There he initiated the people into his discipline. Then he proceeded to *Krauncha dvīpa* after crossing the ocean.

The king and the subjects of that island greeted him with great respects. The Guru after preaching his mission here visited the next two dvīpa viz. Shaka dvīpas and Pushkara dvīpa. Wherever he went, he laid emphasis on the remembrance of the Name of the Lord. His sweet words had their impact and the listeners adopted his doctrines.

The identification of the seven dvīpas made by some scholars is as follows :

I. Jambu (India) ; Plaksha (Arakan and Burma) ; Kusha (Sunda Archipelago) ; Salmali (Malaya Peninsula) ; Krauncha (South India) ; Shaka (Kamboja) and Pushkara (North China and Mongolia).

(Researches on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia by Col. Gerini—Ed. 1909, p. 725.)

II. Jambu (India) ; Kusha (Iran) ; Plaksha (Asia Minor) ; Salmali (Central Europe) ; Krauncha (Western Europe) ; Shaka (British Isles) and Pushkara (Iceland).

(Asiatic Researches by F. Wilford, Vol. VIII, p. 267-346.)

III. Jambu (India) ; Krauncha (Asia Minor) ; Gomeda (Komedia, Tartary) ; Pushkara (Turkestan) ; Shaka (Scythia) ; Kusha (Iran, Arabia and Ethiopia) ; Plaksha (Greece), Salmali (Sarmatia ?)

(The seven dvīpas of the Puranas by V. V. Iyer in the Quarterly Journal of the Mythical Society (London), Volumes 15, 16 and 17.)

IV. Jambu (Major Part of Asia) ; Salmali (Tropical part of Africa bordering Indian ocean including Madagascar) ; Kusha (Iran, Iraq) ; Plaksha (the basin of the mediterranean) ; Pushkara (Japan, Manchuria and south-eastern Siberia) ; Krauncha.

(basin of the black sea) and Saka (countries to the south-east of Jambu dvīpa).

The above identification, as we see, differs with every writer. The writers have entirely excluded the two Americas, probably because the modern world knows that America was discovered by Columbus in fifteenth century.

In his book, "India and Jambu Island", Shri Amarnath Das has tried to prove that Jambu dvīpa is Burma, taking into consideration the geographical findings of Ptolemy.

Even if we accept any one of the above interpretations of dvīpas, we can very well visualise the vastness of the areas said to have been covered by Guru Nanak during his journeys.

III—LEGENDARY JOURNEY NO. 3

THE ASCENT OF GURU NANAK

The ascent of Guru Nanak to *Sach Khand* has been, more or less, described by his biographers in the same way as the nocturnal journey of the Muslim Prophet. The prophet was awakened one night by the Angel Gabriel, who conducted him to the seventh heaven or the abode of God on the heavenly horse, called *Al Borak*. But Guru Nanak dived into a stream named *Waeen* near Sultanpur and disappeared from view. The Prophet returned during the same night, but the Guru appeared on the third day.

We do not know the sources of the biographers but the interesting details of the upper regions capture our imagination. The faithful adherent at once agrees with the biographer, but one with a rational outlook cannot accept all the details. The biographers of Guru Nanak seem to have depended upon the biographies of the Prophet in Persian and Arabic Literatures, regarding the ascension from the earth to the abode of the Lord.

But the cosmology differs in both these religions. Whereas Islam believes in only fourteen region—seven upper and seven nether, the Sikh religion stresses that there are lakhs of regions. Then how did the early biographers of Guru Nanak expound the wrong notions about the cosmology in describing the ascent of the Guru? The story goes that the Guru showed these regions to the son of the 'Pir' of Baghdad.

Again in *JAPJI* of Guru Nanak, the Guru himself has described his flight from the region of Piety to the region of Truth.

There are five regions in the following order : The region of Piety, region of Knowledge, region of Effort, region of Grace and the region of Truth. The names of these regions signify the development of the life of an individual, but the explanation of these regions leads us to the conclusion that they exist physically also. The region of Knowledge includes innumerable worlds and species of beings and the region of Truth contains the inexpressible vastness of Creation.

It is said of Christ that he ascended to the Heaven after he had been laid down to rest : His ascension was his last act in this world, but the ascension of Guru Nanak was in the capacity of an Ambassador returning to the abode of his Master for consultations.

In one of the *Janamsakhis* which I read at Anandpur Sahib, I found the description of the regions through which Guru Nanak passed during his ascension. Two of the regions through which the Guru passed are named as *Mahan Sun* and *Sun Akār*. The former is the region of Darkness and the latter of Light. The prophet Mohammad also passed through these regions of darkness and light during his nocturnal journey. While passing through the region of Light, the Guru soared through the abode of Supreme Goddess where two devotees of the Goddess were talking in the following manner :

Previously we saw Kabir,

After him we have seen Nanak ;

But Kabir looks like a disciple

And this one hath a wonderful personality.

In the famous '*Janamsakhi* of Bhai Bala' we come across the details of the journey of Guru Nanak towards *Sach Khana* through the mountain *Sumeru*. It is said that when Pandavas

left for Heaven, they ascended the great mountain Himalaya. It is probable that the writer of the above 'Janamsakhi', while writing about the journey of Guru Nanak, had in mind the last journey of the Pandavas. While on *Sumeru*, Guru Nanak met the Siddhas in the way. According to Bhai Gurdas, the first question of the Siddhas was : 'What power hath brought thee hither?' To which the Guru replied : 'I have remembered God and have concentrated on Him with love and devotion'.

On the different ranges of mountains, the Guru flies through space. While on Mount *Ūnā*, he shuts his eyes. His disciples Bala and Mardana also shut their eyes. And when the eyes are opened on the instructions of the Guru, they find themselves on Mount *Mina*. At one place the Guru meets the crow-like deity named *Kag Bhasund* and at another place he meets the semi-god *Datta Treya* with three heads. From Mount *Sumeru*, the Guru flies with his companions to *Dhruva Puri* or the city of *Dhruva*, a great saint. The Guru leaves here his companions whom he cannot take with him in his further journey. Then the Guru goes towards *Vishnu Puri*. While writing this part of the journey the writer seems to have been influenced by *Vaishnavism*.

We are really surprised at the different versions of the ascent of the Guru. The details of the *Janamsakhi* are not reliable and are influenced by the similar descriptions in other religious literatures. But keeping in view the descriptions of the *Janamsakhis*, how did the Great Guru traverse through the regions mentioned in his poem *JAPJI*? Did he wade through the space physically or it was just a spiritual flight? Or was it only imaginary? Was it merely the poetic imagination? Was it merely the influence of the description of the spiritual stages of the Sufis? The Microcosmic Theory gives a definite answer to these questions.

Our body is a miniature of cosmos. The *Adi Granth* accepts this view. The Creator of the Universe lives within our body. All the forces working in the universe are similarly working in our body. Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma live in our body. All the places in the universe can be visualised in the body by proper concentration. If God can be realised from within, how can it be impossible to see any place or speak to any personality from within ?

Thus it is quite clear that the Guru might have crossed the regions from within. But on the other hand, the history of spiritualism proves that time and space mean nothing before the spiritual force. It is not at all difficult to rise high into the space, but the gross body of five elements gives place to the subtle body, i. e. the spirit, therefore, the Guru could and did wade through the space with the subtle body. His conception of lakhs of upper and nether regions was not an imaginary one. He actually visited all these regions. Therefore it may be said that whereas the Guru saw the regions of the universe within his gross body, he traversed through them with his subtle body. We have seen that the travels of Guru Nanak for the service of humanity are equally significant. His four *Udāsīs* are just like his flights into the four corners of the world with his message of peace and love. He kept in his view the learned and the uneducated, the rich and the poor, the ant and the elephant, the Brahman and the Shudra, the king and his subjects, the lowly bush and the lustrous star.

IV—SEA-JOURNEYS OF GURU NANAK

Whereas there were several trade-routes on land from India to various foreign countries, there were also several trade-routes through sea in the beginning of sixteenth century, when Guru Nanak undertook his journeys. According to Radhakamal Mukerjee (author of "A History of Indian Civilization") "the Arabian sea-coast of India with such ancient ports as Bharukachcha (Broach), Surparaka (Spara), Roruka, Chakula (Caul) and Sriputra had a more ancient history than the Tamil coast due to the much earlier contacts with the Middle East. Many products of the Deccan found in the tombs of the Pharaohs of Egypt and several Dravidian words preserved in ancient Hebrew Literature testify to the early civilization and commerce of the Western Sea-board. The coast of the Bay of Bengal also became the scene of Indian Maritime adventure, commerce and civilization in the Indian Archipelago . . . It was only in the early centuries of the Christian era that the capital of the later Chola maritime kingdom, Kaveripattinam on the Kaveri river became a centre of international trade, especially frequented by Egyptian-Greek and Chinese merchants." This shows that the trade was done by sea on Indian ports. Merchants from Arabian countries, Greece, Egypt and China visited India and Indian merchants went to foreign countries by sea.

In the beginning of sixteenth century, when Guru Nanak was touring the Parts of Eastern India, the monopoly of Moham-medans as sea-traders had been broken by the Portuguese. In

1503, they established a strong fort at Cochin, which became the centre of great commercial empire of the Portuguese. Their power was recognised from China to Red Sea. In 1510, the city of Goa was conquered by Albuquerque, the Portuguese Viceroy. Within the next ten years, the Portuguese established colonies in Ceylon and on the Coromandal coast. They were granted a trading station at Macao in China and also obtained a free trade with Japan. The islands in the Persian Gulf acknowledged their dominion. They commanded respect in the Red Sea area and had great influence in Abyssinia and other States of Eastern Africa. The Mohammedans had become second-rate sea-traders.

The first journey of Guru Nanak in the East came to end in 1510. The second journey towards the South lasted from 1510 to 1514. The third journey towards the North ended in 1517 and the fourth journey towards the West in 1521. Guru Nanak spent about twenty years in travelling. He propagated his mission in distant areas and came in contact with the votaries of nearly all the religions. During his journey towards the East, he is expected to have visited Burma, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Java, Sumatra and even parts of China. The area covered by Malay Peninsula, Java, Sumatra etc. was known as Salmala Dvīpa. During his journey towards the South, the Guru visited Ceylon. The journey towards the North was within the mountainous area. The journey towards the West was in the Middle East and North-East Africa.

During his three journeys towards the East, South and West, the Guru travelled for some time by sea. The Janamsakhi writers have given very interesting details about the sea-travel of the Guru. In Janamsakhi Bhai Bala, it is written that the Guru travelled on the back of a giant fish, measuring about 35 Kos in length and 5 Kos in breadth. In Puratan Janamsakhi

it is said that the Guru crossed the sea, between the farther tip of India and Ceylon, on foot. His companions walked behind him muttering the sacred Primary Formula (Mul Mantra). But these appear to be the conjectures of the Sikh Chroniclers.

Guru Nanak embarked on the ships from famous sea ports when he travelled by sea. We do not have any record regarding his sea-journey in the East. But we know that he touched the coastal areas of India in the South and the West. The sea-route for Ceylon in those days started from the Port of Nagapatam. It has been mentioned in Haqiqat Rah Mukam. The journey undertaken was completed after three days and three nights when the ship reached Japapatam or Jaffna in Ceylon. The Punjabi trader Mansukh, had visited Ceylon before Guru Nanak went there.

We know that during his fourth journey towards the West, Guru Nanak went to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. Bhai Gurdas has given a short description of Guru's visit to Mecca and Baghdad. During this journey, the Guru embarked from one of the ports of Gujarat, most probably Surat. He had earlier visited Gujarat during his second journey, when several Labana traders had become his Sikhs. It is probable that the Guru accompanied his disciples to Arabian and African States. He visited Aden and Jaddah and he might have made a short trip to Zanzibar island. Gyani Gyan Singh in his "Twarikh Guru Khalsa" has mentioned the port of Karachi as the starting point. But it is doubtful if there was any developed harbour at the site of Karachi in those days.

On Indian coasts, the Guru visited Chittagong, Calcutta, Jagannath Puri, Nasaulipatam, Nagapatam, Ramaswaram, Goa, Bombay, Cambay, Surat, Broach, Dwarka etc. In Janamsakhis, there is mention of a port named Lahri, which has not been located so far. While on his journeys, Guru Nanak spent several

years and it is probable that he visited several islands and foreign lands by sea, where the merchant ships proceeded from Indian ports. We are also told in Janamsakhis that the Guru visited Sapt Dvīpas or the Seven islands and Nav Khand or the nine varshas of Jambu Dvīpa. We are not clear about the location of all these. For us, the journeys undertaken by Guru Nanak to Dvīpas and Khands are imaginary, but they may not be so. The journeys to some of these places might have been done through sea transport.

V—GURU NANAK IN UTTARAKHAND

The Himalayan tract from the Ganges to the Kali river is known as Uttarakhand. It includes the land of Badrinath and Kedarnath, which was known by the name of Kedarkhand. The other name of Uttarakhand appears in the records as Kurmachal. The name of the area prevalent today is Kumaon. The boundary of Kumaon is marked by the mountain ranges in the north separating it from Tibet, the Kali river in the east, the Tons river in the west and Tarai or Brar in the south. At present three districts of Kumaon area namely Pithoragarh, Chamoli and Uttar Kashi form part of a separate division known as Uttarakhand division.

The Indian pilgrims going to Badrinath and Kedarnath in Uttarakhand pass through five routes : (1) From Moradabad to Ramnagar, Nainital and Almora (2) Bareilly to Nainital (3) Pilibhit, Tanakpur to Champawat and Pithoragarh (4) Bijnor, Kotdwar to Garhwal and (5) Hardwar, Rishikesh to Tehri Garhwal.

In the sixties of the fifteenth century, when Guru Nanak was born, Man Sah (or Man Shah) was the ruler of Garhwal. He is said to have ascended the throne about 1460 A.D. Under his reign, his state touched zenith of its success. After him several rulers ascended the throne of Garhwal and ruled over a large area of Uttarakhand. It was about 1515 A.D. when Guru Nanak visited the area. Shaivism seems to have held great sway in the area. Shiva's Trimurti is seen quite frequently. The Shaivite images cover various forms of Shiva and the allied

deities like Ganesh and Karttikayā. Vaishnavism holds the second place. Vaishnava images comprise all the incarnations of Vishnu. The miscellaneous images include Brahma icons, Surya and the Navagraha icons, icons of various goddesses and icons of Kubera and Garuda. In fact, religion has played a significant role in the area. Besides the influence of Shaivism, Vashnavism and Shaktatism, the impact of Gorakhnathis and Kanphatas is visible even today. At Srinagar in Garhwal, Gorakhnath is said to be worshipped as an incarnation of Shiva. There are Gorakhpanti temples in Nainital, Almora and Dwarhat. Naga worship is also prevalent in the areas.

Uttarakhand is the most sacred region for the Hindus, because their two sacred rivers Ganges and Yamuna have their sources in the region and moreover, it is the home of their great gods. Holy temples of Badrinath and Kedarnath exist there. Thousands of pilgrims visit the sacred shrines every year. Guru Nanak seems to have entered Pauri district of Uttarakhand in the summer of A.D. 1515 through Bijnor and stayed at Kotdwara where there is a Gurdwara commemorating his visit to the place. From Kotdwara he proceeded to the shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath *via* Srinagar. At Srinagar there is a Gurdwara in honour of his visit. The Guru is said to have held a debate with the Hindu Sadhus of the time at Badrinath for several days and gave his own interpretation of the real Sanatana Dharma. A memorial was erected in his honour at Badrinath.

From Pauri district, the Guru moved to Almora and Nainital districts. Nainital district was a great flourishing centre of Gorakhpantis and Kanphatas. The place where the Guru held theological discussion with the yogis is known as Nanak Matta. The yogis suffered a crushing defeat. From Nanak Matta the Guru moved to a place in present Almora district, known as

Reetha Sahib. Here the bitter soapnuts were changed into sweet food for Mardana and up to this day, the sweet soapnuts are found there. This place is about 30 miles from Nanak Matta and 42 miles from Haldwani.

From Reetha Sahib, the Guru travelled to Bageshwar on the banks of river Sarju where still stands a small platform commemorating his visit to the place. Then the Guru passed through the Tarai region touching Bareilly, Pilibhit etc. before entering the Nepal territory. It is believed that from Bageshwar, the Guru took the route to Kailash mountain in Tibet, but his visit to Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and thence to Tibet belie this belief.

VI—JOURNEY IN LEGENDARY MOUNTAINS

The description of islands and mountains is mostly found in "Janamsakhi Bhai Bala". During his third journey, the Guru ascended the mountains and began his journey in the Himalayas. Most of the names of the mountains mentioned in the *Janamsakhis* are not found anywhere else. The Guru is said to have met the Siddhas and mythological figures like Dhruva, Prehlad, Dattatreya and Kag Bhasund in these mountains.

The Guru began his journey from the mountain of gold. Though the name of the mountain of gold is mentioned as Sumeru or Meru in the Puranas, this mountain was not Sumeru. From this mountain the Guru ascended Himachal and then travelled on the other mountains in the following order while going to *Sach Khand* (the Region of Truth) :

1. Sirdhār
2. Ūnā
3. Silkā
4. Mīnā
5. Sumeru
6. Bayār
7. Al-Lāchīn
8. Kailāsh, and
9. Akhand

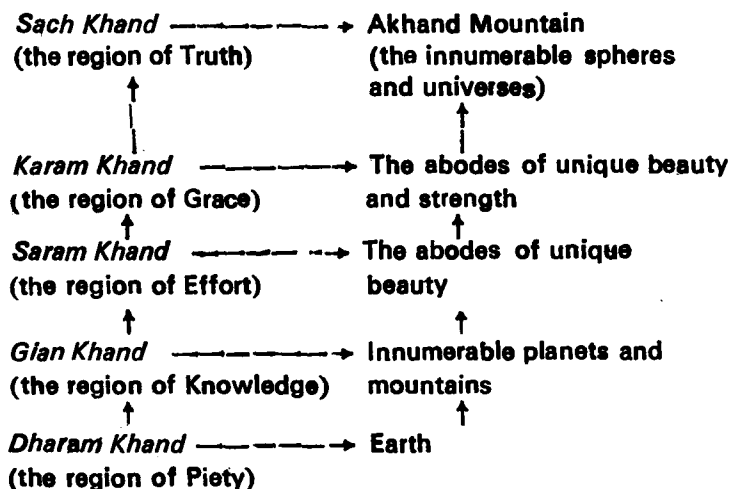
While returning from *Sach Khand*, the following order of mountains was followed :

1. Kālkā
2. Kalādhār
3. Sītal
4. Silā
5. Ahār
6. Mīnā
7. Gīrnār, and
8. Omkār

Other names of the mountains such as Kūnā, Idak Ikhan, Ulkā etc. also appear in some versions of "Janamsakhi Bhai Bala". We do not find the mountains of most of these names on the earth. The names like Sumeru Kailāsh, Al-Lāchīn and Gīrnār are familiar names. We know that the word Sumeru or Meru has been used for Himalayas (or even Kailāsh by Bhai Gurdas). Kailāsh is a mountain in Tibet near Mansaovar Lake. Al-Lāchin may be another form of Lachen in Sikkim. Gīrnār is a mountain in Gujarat. But the mountains of these names in the above list do not appear to be the names of earthly mountains. When we read that *Sirdhār* is 37,000 yojanas from the earth and *Akhand* is 40,00,000 yojanas from the earth, we have a feeling of height and higher planes. When one mountain ends, the other mountain begins. Thus these mountains may be said to be situated in upper planes or even planets. There are mountain ranges in the nine Varshas of our earth, but since the idea of height above height is involved, these mountains cannot belong to any of these Varshas.

About Sumeru, it is written in Bhagavata Purana that it is a mountain of gold. It is situated in the navel of Ilavrita Varsha. It is 84,000 yojanas above the ground and 16,000 under the ground.

There is one possible interpretation. We find a mention of the visit of the Guru to *Sach Khand* (the region of Truth) through these mountains. *Sach Khand* is the highest point in the universe. The mountains seem to be the planes through which the Guru had to traverse before reaching *Sach Khand*. Our earth is *Dharam Khand* or the region of piety. We can show the ascent of the Guru through the following table :



All the gods like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Indra and saints like Druva live in the second plane, i.e. *Gian Khand*. All the upper mountains below Akhand are situated in *Gian Khand* or the region of Knowledge. Thus the above-mentioned mountains through which the Guru travelled belong to the region beyond earth which can be known through spiritual discipline. These mountains are like big obstacles which have to be crossed, if we have to reach *Sach Khand*. They are like stages where the great souls can go. They are like the abode of great saints who have merited their habitat on them.

VII

JANAMSAKHIS AND DESHAS (COUNTRIES)

When we study the *Janamsakhis* (biographies) of Guru Nanak, we come across the names of several *deshas* (countries) and cities most of which are not found in modern geography. These *deshas* are as follows :

1. Āsā desha
 2. Gūjīrī desha
 3. Tilang desha
 4. Dhanāsari desha
 5. Sorath desha
 6. Kavroo desha
 7. Mārū desha
 8. Habash desha
 9. Munafiq desha
 10. Bishambhar desha
 11. Haru desha
 12. Singladip
 13. Bhutant desha
 14. Bisīar desha
 15. Rūm desha
 16. Shām desha
1. Āsā desha is Assam.
 2. Gūjīrī desha is Gurjar desha or Gujarat.
 3. Tilang desha is Telangana which is a part of Andhra Pradesh.
 4. Dhanāsari desha is Tenasserim in Burma.
 5. Sorath desha is Saurashtra.

6. Kavroo desha is Kamrup in Assam.
7. Maru desha includes Marwar. It is the Indian desert called Thar.
8. Habash desha is the country of the blacks, *i. e.*, Abyssinia and Sudan.
9. Munafiq desha ; Munafiq is a Persian word which means hypocrite. It refers to a person who outwardly professes to believe in a thing but secretly denies it.

The country with a population of such persons in the time of the Guru remains unidentified. It may be the area inhabited by *Thugs* in central India.

10. Bishambar desha is the area around Patna (Behar).
11. Haru desha. The *Janamsakhi* mentions Haru desha under the influence of Jainas, therefore, it may be the area near Bikaner.
12. Singladip is Ceylon or Lanka.
13. Bhutant desha is Bhutan and the area surrounding it.
14. Bisīar desha is old Bashahr State in Kumaon-Garhwal area of Himachal Pradesh.
15. Rūm desha is Turkey.
16. Shām desha is Syria.

VIII—GURU NANAK AND CEYLON

Dr. Saddhamangala Karunaratna, M. A. (Ceylon), Ph.D. (Cantab), Assistant Commissioner of Archaeology, Ceylon, read a Paper entitled "Guru Nanak and Ceylon" at the International Seminar on the Life and Teachings of Guru Nanak at the Punjabi University, Patiala, held from September 3 to September 5, 1969. The scholar referred to an original writing on a slab which is preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Anuradhapura. This writing is numbered M-III in the Museum Register. It contains a passage in Sanskrit scribbled in very small characters, which is said to have been written by the orders of the king Dharamaparakramabahu, who ascended the throne in 1493 A.C.

It is written in the above-mentioned passage that in the fifteenth year of the reign of Dharamaparakramabahu IX, Jnanakacarya, a divine from abroad is said to have visited Jayavardhana. He came from a village in the area of Samantapattana. He met the ruler and explained to him the tenets of his Faith. The king is said to have promised to embrace the New Faith, if the saint defeated his Sangharaja, Dharmakirti-sthavira by name.

A public meeting was arranged in front of the palace, where a debate on Ishvara and Soul was held between Jnanakacarya and Dharmakirti-sthavira. The saint from abroad defeated the Sangharaja. The powerful Brahmins of the court, who did not like the Sangharaja were happy over the outcome of the debate.

They wanted to see him disgraced. According to the custom, the result of the debate depended on the majority of votes of the audience. It is said that the Brahmins had also arranged a majority for Jnanakacarya.

After the defeat of Dharmakirti-sthavira, Jnanakacarya approached the king and asked him to keep up his promise. But the king said that he would be able to give a reply after making enquiries about the result of the debate.

When the Brahmins ascertained that the Faith of Jnanakacarya laid emphasis on monotheism and rejected idol-worship and caste-system, they could not relish the idea of the embracement of this New Faith by the king, because it would definitely end their supremacy in the court. Therefore they acquired the support of a monk named Dharmadhvaja-Pandita, a scholar of Sanskrit and Pali, Hinduism and Buddhism. This scholar challenged Jnanakacarya for a debate, which was accepted. A public debate was arranged again in front of the palace. But the Brahmins had managed their majority beforehand. The subject of the debate was image-worship. At the end of the debate the voting took place and it resulted in the victory of Dharmadhvaja-Pandita as expected. Then Jnanakacarya left Jayavardhanapura. In this way the Brahmins first got rid of Dharmakirti-sthavira and then managed to strengthen their position in the court by forcing Jnanakacarya to leave the capital.

Dr. Karunaratna feels that the word Jnanakacarya has been used for Guru Nanak.

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